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# THE WAR AND THE NEW AGE

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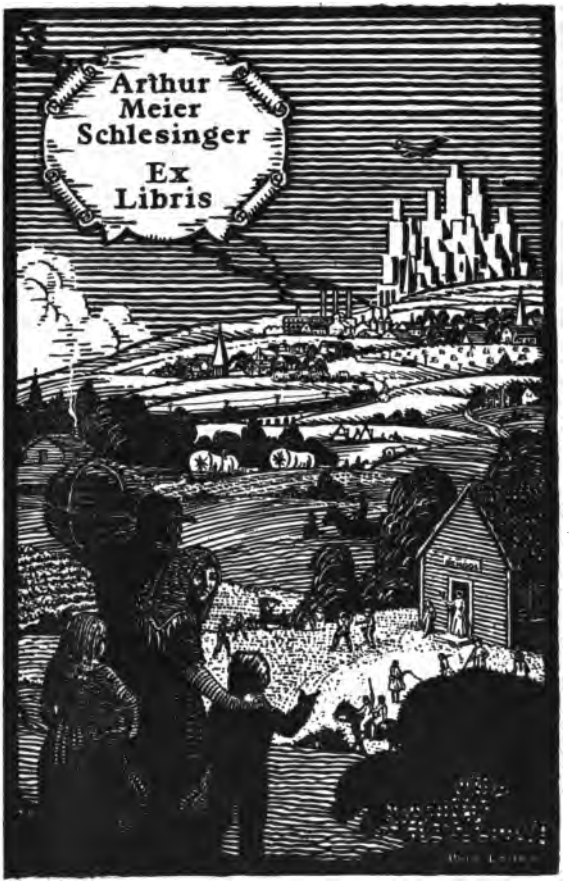


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A. M. Schlesinger
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# THE WAR
## AND
# THE NEW AGE

BY

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# FOREWORD

A RECORD of the World War as early as this must be incomplete and more or less marked by positive errors. Still I think it worth while to put a brief survey at once into the hands of American students, without waiting for the fuller light that future years will bring. The war has aroused in high-school boys and girls a splendid fervor for freedom and democracy. The magnificent story of America's part in that war, however imperfectly told, should give food to nourish and harden that impulsive fervor into intelligent and lasting resolve.

I acknowledge here my very great debt to my friend and former colleague, William Stearns Davis. Through his kindness I have been enabled to read in manuscript, and to make free use of, the admirable chapter on the campaigns of the war that is to appear in the new edition of his *Roots of the War*.

WILLIS MASON WEST.

WINDAGO FARM,
August 1, 1919.



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# THE WAR AND THE NEW AGE

## YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY

The transition from one era to another is not seen clearly as a rule until long after. We talk glibly now of the beginning of Modern history, or of the Renaissance; but the men who lived in the year 400 A.D., or 1300, were not many of them at that time aware of unusual change. To-day, however, as never before in human history, old institutions and customs and ideas are visibly tottering and sliding into ruin, and new arrangements in society and government are springing into life. **Before our eyes, the world is passing into a new age.**

The event that especially marks the end of the old era is *the World War of 1914–1918.* That war discredited the old balance-of-power theory, the age-long system of military preparedness by hostile groups of allied nations, as the best safeguard of world peace; and, indirectly, it overthrew autocracy in government and infinitely weakened autocracy in industry. It proved a war for democracy and for peace. And the event that especially marks the opening of the new era is *the adoption of the plan for a League of Nations by the Peace Congress of 1919.* These two mighty events, with closely related movements, are the theme of this small volume.



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# CHAPTER I

## PRUSSIAN AUTOCRACY AND MILITARISM — THE TWIN MONSTERS THAT THREATENED THE WORLD

*The national industry of Prussia is war.* — MIRABEAU.

**How Prussia found profit in war**

Every student knows how Bismarck, supported by the divine-right monarch, William I of Prussia, forged and refashioned the Prussian army in 1861–1864. Bismarck did this by overriding the Prussian constitution for four years, against the valiant opposition of the Prussian parliament. At any moment, if the King had weakened, or if revolution had begun, the Liberals would have sent Bismarck to the scaffold — as they constantly threatened. Bismarck knew that he must show his new tool profitable quickly; and ruthlessly and trickily he forced war against Denmark in 1864 and against Austria in 1866.

**German Liberals, too, accept militarism for its profits**

These wars doubled Prussia in size and wealth, and made her mistress of Germany. To their shame, the old Prussian Liberals accepted this dazzling bribe: since militarism and autocracy had proven profitable, they ceased to oppose and began to applaud. Then in 1870–1871, Bismarck crushed France, and made Germany, so long weak and despised, the mightiest force in European politics. And, to their shame, German Liberals accepted Prussianism greedily for the sake of these profits.

**The German Empire an autocracy**

The German Empire, which lasted from 1871 to 1918, was Bismarck's work as the product of these wars. It was a federal state, but not a "free" state. Its substates were mostly monarchies, and the greatest of them, Prussia, equal to three fifths of all, was virtually a divine-right autocracy. The King of Prussia was ex-officio Emperor; and his autocratic power



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in Prussia went far of itself toward making him an autocrat in the Empire. There was a federal parliament, chosen by manhood suffrage, but that body was little more than a debating society.

The imperial autocracy was frugal, and claimed to be paternal. It made justice easy to secure; it guarded against food adulteration — before most other countries awoke to this need; and in other ways it cared for the public health and material comfort.

But alongside this watchful paternalism, there were grievous faults. Germany had been made by violence and fraud, and the result showed in a spirit of brutal militarism, in police rule, and in the predominance of the methods of the drill-sergeant in private life. There was little security for personal rights. Trial by jury, freedom of the press, freedom of public meetings, and free speech existed in only a limited degree.

**Kaiser Wilhelm II, 1888–1918**

The Kaiser (Emperor), head of the government and of the army, claimed obedience as of divine right. This was preeminently true of Kaiser Wilhelm II, who came to the throne in 1888. As a youth he had been a great admirer of Bismarck, who, as Chancellor, was still guiding German policy; but it soon became plain that the two men were each too masterful to work together. In 1890, the Kaiser curtly dismissed the old Chancellor from office, and from that time to the end he himself was supposed to control the policy of the Empire. William repeatedly stated the divine-right theory in as striking a form as ever did James I of England or Louis XIV of France two or three centuries ago. "On me, as German Emperor," he told his soldiers, "the spirit of God has descended. I am His sword and His vice-regent." "All-Highest" was a recognized form of address for the Emperor. And the phrase ironically attributed to him, — "Me and Gott," — is no great exaggeration of the patronizing tone in which he often referred to the Almighty as a partner — as in an address at Berlin in 1901: "We shall conquer, even though we be surrounded by enemies; for there lives a powerful ally, the old, good God in heaven, who, ever

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since the time of the Great Elector, has always been on our side."

**The junkers**

This autocracy was upheld most of all by the landed squires, or junkers. Says Dr. Davis (*Roots of the War*, 188), — "A typical junker was the owner of a large landed property with a picturesque and uncomfortable ancient schloss (castle) dominating a village or town, where peasant children scrambled with pigs and chickens in the great dungheaps before the houses. He might come to enjoy city life. . . . He might reform his agricultural methods. . . . None the less he remained heart and soul a country aristocrat . . . accustomed to curse his inferiors, to cane his servants, and to despise all who lived by trade."

This class furnished the officers of the army. For most of them, indeed, the army was the only possible career. Pay was pitifully small, and the nobles were poor. But the officer's social standing made it easy for him to find a wife among the daughters of wealthy merchants. No officer, however, could make such a marriage until a committee of higher officers had approved the bride — and the dower which was to atone for her ignoble blood.

**German "Big Business"**

The autocracy had one other pillar. The junkers were largely Prussian and rural. But after 1870 Germany began to grow into a city Germany. The "industrial revolution," the factory system, which had grown up in England before 1800 and in France by 1825, did not begin to make headway in Germany until nearly 1870. Then, indeed, manufactures and trade grew by leaps — aided by the coal and iron of Alsace-Lorraine and by subsidies from the huge war indemnity just then robbed of France. Science became the servant of manufactures as it had not before been in any country. Especially was chemistry applied successfully to industries like the manufacture of dyes — which became practically a German monopoly. The whole artisan class, too, were trained to "efficiency" in trade schools, — which were distinctly class schools, suited on this German plan to an undemocratic land

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only, in which the son of an artisan must look for no "higher" station than his father.

All this meant a tremendous growth of cities. Hamburg grew from 350,000 people in 1870 to 1,000,000 in 1910; Berlin from 820,000 to 2,000,000; Essen from 50,000 to 300,000; while many wholly new centers of trade appeared where had been only farming hamlets. The population of the Empire doubled in these forty years, and all this increase was a city increase — which meant that the old city population was multiplied four-fold. Along with this change, there appeared a new figure in German life, the princely manufacturing capitalist. After 1880, the thousands of this class took their place — alongside the junker nobility — as a chief support of German autocracy with a vivid expectation of favor to be received in form of special privileges.[1]

**The Prussian army system**

The junker and the capitalist made public opinion; but the autocracy had also its physical arm. After 1866, the Prussian army system was extended over all Germany. The fundamental principle was the universal obligation of all males to serve. The army was the armed nation. At twenty each man was supposed to enter the ranks for two years' active service. For five years more he was a member of the "active reserves," with two months in camp each year. These reserves were to be called out for regular service in case of war. For twelve years more he was listed in the territorial reserve — liable for garrison duty in time of war, and even for front rank service in special need. Exemption from training was usually allowed to the only son of a dependent widow, to students of theology, and to those unfit because of physical defects.

The Prussian victories of 1866 and 1870 convinced all Europe of the superiority of this system over the old professional armies,

[1] The war revealed this class as gross exploiters, fattening on their country's need. In no other land did war-profiteering prosper on so large a scale as in Germany, where the general misery was so terrible. This growth of huge war-fortunes was shown plainly by the government's income-tax reports in 1918, as published in German papers.

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**Europe adopts the German army system**

and nearly every state in Europe soon adopted it, with slight variations as to age and exemptions. Europe became a group of armed camps. Along with this went ever-increasing attention to improved rifles, larger cannon, and other costly armament. The burden was enormous, and the direct cost was far less than the indirect cost involved in withdrawing so large a part of each man's best years from productive work. England, trusting to her navy, and the United States, trusting to her position, were the only large countries that dared refuse the crushing burden — and for England the cost of her navy was almost as serious. Certain good results, no doubt, as well as many evil ones, came from the military discipline; but on the whole that army system was the most woeful waste of human energy the world ever saw.

Worse still, this militarism was a constant temptation to war; and, in Germany, the worst result was the way in which it helped to make the masses servile in private life under the rule of king, junker, and policeman. Flogging and other brutal punishment for slight offenses was the rule in the Prussian army; and there are reliably reported numerous cases of suicide by soldiers who were so mistreated by officers that they could no longer live in decent self-respect. Those who submitted to such "discipline" became slaves.

**Militarism** was one phase of the Prussian danger to the world, as autocracy was the other phase. Militarism is not the same thing as having a large army, though it is likely to grow out of having one. *Militarism is a state of mind* regarding the army: a habit of thinking that the army is the most important matter, and of exalting it above the civil powers at home, and of trusting to force in relations with other nations rather than to justice and good will and reason. In the long run, too, militarism leads to a servile attitude on the part of the people toward army officers, wholly incompatible with democracy.[1]

[1] War Encyclopedia, under "Militarism" and "Prussianism"; and C. Altschul's *German Militarism and Its German Critics*, esp. pp. 20–21.

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Two results of the new commercial and industrial forces in German life must be noted before we are ready to understand Germany in the war and after.

Germany's effort for colonial empire

1. The new manufacturers clamored for sole markets. So Germany wished a colonial empire. In 1884 Bismarck yielded to this demand, and after 1890 Kaiser Wilhelm supported it even more ardently. In 1883 Germany had no foot of territory outside Europe. Thirty years later she had more than a million square miles — located in East Africa, Southwest Africa, Central Africa, in China about the city of Kiau Chow in the Shantung peninsula, and in many rich islands in the Pacific. These non-European possessions contained in 1910 some 14 million inhabitants (besides over 40 millions more in districts like Shantung, which were recognized as German "spheres of influence"); but only some 20,000 of all these were whites. And Germany proved herself absolutely unfit to rule subject races, turning them into slaves, to secure ivory, rubber, and copra, and putting down native risings with medieval cruelty reinforced by modern efficiency.

Growth of Germany's naval power

2. Kaiser Wilhelm II adopted another new policy. He determined to make Germany a great naval power. He enlarged and fortified the Kiel Canal, near the base of the Danish peninsula, from the North Sea to the Baltic, so that his navy might have perfect protection and so that it might instantly concentrate in either sea. And year by year, against the violent resistance of the Socialists in the Reichstag, he forced through huge appropriations to construct more superdreadnaughts.

The pretext for this naval policy was the need to protect the new trade and new colonies. The real motive, often frankly confessed, was, at the first chance, to destroy England and weaken the United States. Indeed the Kaiser and his advisers said openly that, had their fleet been ready, they would have attacked the United States during our Spanish War, to destroy the Monroe Doctrine with its check upon German plans in South America (cf. West's *American People*, §§ 762, 771). In 1902 Germany had a difficulty with Venezuela, and showed plain

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intention to seize at least a port there. President Roosevelt sent the American fleet, under Dewey, into Venezuelan waters and gave the Germans forty-eight hours to withdraw. His somewhat peremptory method was successful. But from that time, we are told,[1] German naval officers were keenly interested in New York's military defenses.

**Germany and England**

Some survey like the foregoing is needful to guard us against the "tyranny of names." England and Germany in 1914 were both "constitutional monarchies"; but that does not mean that they were in any way alike, in government or society. England had a democratic government, in which the monarchic and aristocratic survivals were practically powerless — mere matters of form: the German Empire was practically an absolutism. England's ideals were based upon industry and world-peace: Germany's ideals were based upon militarism and conquest. Englishmen thought of the "state" as a condition for the full development of the individual man: Germans thought of individual men as existing primarily for the sake of the absolutist state. German capitalism was perhaps in itself no more grasping and greedy than like forces in other countries. But in England, America, or France, those forces must cease to work evil whenever the majority of the people are wise enough and good enough to will it so — and vote so: in Germany that capitalistic greed was backed by an irresistible military despotism against which the masses were powerless, either by ballots or bullets.

FOR FURTHER READINGS.— References on the *spirit* of German autocracy are given at the close of chapter iv. On the imperial German government, details are given in West's *Modern World*, pp. 654–661.

[1] Davis, *Roots of the War*, 360.

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# CHAPTER II

## MAKING "ALLIANCES" FOR PEACE

By 1900, Europe had fallen into two hostile camps, the *Triple Alliance* and the *Triple Entente.*

**The Triple Alliance**

1. Before Bismarck fell from power, he had built the Triple Alliance. After 1871 he sought to isolate France, so as to keep her from finding any ally in a possible "war of revenge." To this end he cultivated friendship with all other European powers, but especially with Russia and Austria. Austria he had beaten in war only a few years earlier (1866); but he had treated her with marked gentleness in the peace treaty, and the ruling German element in Austria was quite ready now to find backing in the powerful and successful German Empire.

**Bismarck prefers Austria to Russia**

Soon, however, Bismarck found that he must choose between Austria and Russia. These two were bitter rivals for control in the Balkans. The Slav peoples there, recently freed from the Turks, looked naturally to Russia, who had won their freedom for them, as the "Big Brother" of all Slavs and all Greek religionists. But Austria, shut out now from control in Central Europe, was bent upon aggrandizement to the South. In particular her statesmen meant to win a strip of territory through to Salonika, on the Aegean, so that, with a railroad thither, they might control the rich Aegean trade. If Serbia were able to fulfill her dream of a South Slav state reaching to the Adriatic, she would interpose an inseparable Slav barrier to this plan, right across the path of Austria's ambition. Accordingly Austria sought always to keep Serbia weak and small; while Russia, hating Austria even more than she loved the Balkan Slavs, backed Serbia.



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This rivalry between Austria and Russia became so acute by 1879 that there was always danger of war; and in that year Bismarck chose to side with Austria as the surer ally. Accordingly he formed a definite written alliance with Austria to the effect that Germany would help Austria in case of war with Russia, and Austria would help Germany in case she were attacked by France and any other Power.

**Italy drawn into Bismarck's league**

Three years later, Bismarck drew Italy into the league, making it the Triple Alliance. Italy was so bitterly enraged at the French seizure of Tunis in that year, in flat disregard of Italian imperialistic ambitions there, that she laid aside her ancient differences with Austria for a time and agreed to aid the central empires in any war in which they should be attacked by two or more powers — in return for backing in her colonial ambitions.

**The Dual Alliance of 1884**

2. Then Russia and France, each isolated in Europe, drew together for mutual protection into a "Dual Alliance" (1884). But Bismarck hoped to draw England into his "triple" league; and his hope was not unreasonable. In the eighties and nineties, England and France were bitter rivals in Africa, and England and Russia, in Asia. England, however, clung

**England's "splendid isolation"**

to a proud policy of "splendid isolation." Then, after Bismarck's fall, she began to see in the German Emperor's colonial ambitions a more threatening rival than France; and Russia's defeat by Japan made Russia less dangerous. German militarism was deeply hateful to English democracy, and Germany's new commercial activity threatened England's trade, while the new navy that the Kaiser was building could be meant only to work England's destruction. Moreover, England and France were daily coming to a better understanding, and in 1903 a sweeping arbitration treaty put any war between them almost out of the question. Soon afterward, England and Russia succeeded in agreeing upon a line in Persia which should separate the "influence" of one power in that country from the "influence" of the other, so removing all immediate prospect of trouble between the two (1910).

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From this time the Dual Alliance became the Triple Entente — England, France, and Russia. England was not bound by definite treaty to give either country aid in war; but it was plain that France and Russia were her friends, and that she could not look on quietly and see her friends crushed by Germany — which was showing marked hostility to her.

**The Triple Entente**

Each of the two huge armed leagues always protested that its aim was peace. No doubt many men in both — and nearly all in one — did shrink from precipitating a conflict between such enormous forces under the new conditions of army organization, quick transportation, and deadly explosives. For half a century (1871–1914), except for the minor struggles in the half-savage Balkans, Europe rested in an "armed peace."

**The alliances and peace**

But this "peace" was based upon fear, and it was costly. Year by year, each alliance strove to make its armies and navies mightier than the other's. Huge and huger cannon were invented, only to be cast into the scrap heap for still huger ones. A dreadnaught costing millions was scrapped in a few months by some costlier design. The burden upon the workers and the evil moral influences of such armaments were only less than the burden and evil of war. In every land voices began to cry out that it was all needless: that the world was too Christian and too wise ever again to let itself be desolated by a great war. And then came some interesting efforts to find new machinery by which to guard against war — in standing arbitration treaties, permanent international tribunals like the Hague Court, and occasional World Congresses.

**Mild efforts for world peace**

Too soon, however, it was made plain, that, noble as these efforts were, they were insufficient, in the absence of a more organized world opinion and organized world force and of radical measures of disarmament. And at the Hague Congresses in 1899 and in 1907, the earnest proposals for disarmament made by England and the United States failed of result because of the implacable opposition of Germany and Austria. It is significant, too, that Germany repeatedly refused to enter into standing arbitration treaties with the United States, though

**Germany defeats proposals for disarmament**

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such treaties had been concluded between us and every other important country.

**Army increases in Europe in 1913**

The year 1913, after some local wars in the Balkans, saw a new outburst of militarism. Germany adopted a new army bill planning an increase of the army in peace from 650,000 to 870,000, with an immense money appropriation.[1] Three weeks later (July 20), France, in terror, raised her term of active service from two years to three, adding fifty per cent to her forces under arms. Austria and Russia adopted plans for similar reorganization of their armies. Even little Belgium, alarmed at the building of German railways to her border — at vast expense and with no apparent purpose except for invasion — adopted universal military service. Each country of course found excuse and incitement to further efforts in the like efforts by its rivals. In particular, German and Austrian papers published frenzied articles on the danger with which their countries were threatened by the proposed enormous increase of Russia's army and by new Russian railways that apparently looked to an invasion of Germany, just as German roads looked to an invasion of Belgium and France. The "balance" of power was a matter of unstable equilibrium. A touch would tip it into universal war.

Within a year that war was precipitated by a trivial event in the Balkans.

[1] The Socialists in the Reichstag voted against the army bill, but immediately afterward most of them voted for the appropriation. This inconsistency has a partial explanation not wholly to their discredit. The new taxes, for the first time in the history of the Empire, bore heavily upon large incomes and upon the landlords. The Socialists had long advocated this sort of taxation in vain.

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# CHAPTER III

## THE BALKANS: THE SEED GROUND OF WAR

The Balkan races

A century ago, all southeast Europe, beyond Austria and Russia, was part of Turkey. But the Turks were mere invaders. They were rulers, but not numerous in Europe except near Constantinople, and they had no part in European civilization.

The Greeks

In no other part of the earth of so small extent was there such a mingling of distinct peoples — even apart from the Turkish conquest. The land is puckered and crumpled into a quaint network of interlacing mountains and valleys; and the inhabitants themselves were almost as much intermixed.

Roumanians

Besides the ruling Turk there were five distinct subject races. In the old Hellenic peninsula dwelt the Greeks, with the memories of their ancient greatness. North of the Danube lay the Roumanians, proud of their legendary descent from Roman colonists in Dacia. Their language to-day is closer to the old Latin than is any other living European language, although in blood the people are no doubt now mainly Slav. Only half their race lived in "Roumania." One fourth dwelt in Bessarabia, which Russia had seized from the Turks in 1812; and another fourth were in Transylvania, which Hungary had held ever since she conquered it from the Turks in the eighteenth century.

Albanians

Between these Greek and "Roman" peoples lay the Bulgarians, the Serbs, and along the Adriatic just north of Greece, the Albanians. These last were wild herdsmen, descendants of the ancient Illyrians. For the most part they had adopted Mohammedanism and they willingly supplied excellent troops for the Turkish army; but in other respects their poverty and



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their mountains made it possible for them to keep a rude sort of self-rule, without much interference from Constantinople. Serbs and Bulgars need a longer explanation.

**The Serbs and their divisions**

The Serbs were the leading survivors of the conquering South Slavs who settled in the Balkan regions in the sixth century. They have long been imbued with a natural ambition to restore their ancient empire as it stood when the Turk overthrew it in the fatal battle of Kossova (1389). But even more than the Roumanians, the South Slavs had been broken up by accidents of war. The northwestern part, the Bosnians, had remained independent longer than Serbia proper; and then, when they were conquered, their nobles became Mohammedans, to secure Turkish favor, though the peasants remained Greek Christians — like most of the subject peoples outside Albania. Other northern parts of Serbia, lands of the Croats and Slovenes, were reconquered from Turkey by Hungary in the eighteenth century, and so were no longer part of the home land, to which by race and language they belonged. Moreover, in the fast-

**Montenegrins**

nesses of Montenegro (" Black Mountain ") dwelt some 200,000 half-savage Serbs who had never yielded to the Turks but had kept their freedom at the cost of " five hundred years of ferocious heroism." In Serbia itself, the Turks had for the most part killed off the nobles. The village life was left, however, much as it had been of old. The people managed their local matters in small democracies, and earned their living as farmers and herdsmen of droves of pigs — for which, however, they had no proper sale after Austrian jealousy shut them from her markets. As in all Christian lands ruled by the Turk, oppression and cruelty dwarfed their civilization.

**The Bulgarians**

East of Serbia, beyond a dividing mountain range, lay the Bulgarians. The " Bulgars " came into the peninsula as conquerors from central Asia some two centuries later than the Slav Serbs. Originally they were baggy-trousered Asiatic nomads, akin to Tartars and Turks, and to-day they have intense pride in that ancient history as a race of conquerors. But in blood they have been so absorbed by the Slavs among

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whom they settled that there is little real difference in race between them and Roumanian on the one side or Serb on the other.

Still a long history of rivalry, warfare, and mutual cruelty has left an intense "race" hatred between Bulgars, Serbs, and Greeks; and this hatred has been made hotter by the fact that each one of the three has hoped to win for itself the northern Aegean coast, as the Turkish power has decayed. Turkish misrule has still further confused this perplexing picture. During her centuries of control, to keep Bulgarians and Serbs, either one, from rising unitedly against her, Turkey has transplanted whole groups of Bulgarian villages into Serbia, quite in the fashion of ancient Oriental despotisms, replacing them with villages of transplanted Serbs — so that each subject race should always have enemies in its midst.

**Race hatreds and rivalries**

This is a proper place to survey the distinctive marks of the four great divisions of European Slavs: (1) *the Russians*, influenced by long Tartar domination in the middle ages, by admixture with various border peoples, and by the Greek Church; (2) *the Poles*, set off from the Russians by the adoption of Latin Christianity and by German instead of Tartar influence; (3) *the Bohemian* and neighboring Slavic peoples now known as Czecho-Slovaks, resembling the Poles in their history but dominated in recent centuries by Austrian Germans; and (4) *these South Slavs* of the Balkans, with a promising Greek influence in the early middle ages, followed by a long and crushing subjection to the Turk which has lasted in part to our day.

It is impossible to tell here the long agony of the century struggle by which the subject Balkan peoples finally threw off the Turkish yoke, but some parts of the story are necessary. The first successful revolt was the Greek rising in 1821–1828. The intervention of England, Russia, and France compelled Turkey to grant Greek independence; and at the same time Roumania and Serbia advanced to the position of merely tribu-

**The subject races win freedom**

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tary states, dependent upon Turkey but ruled by their own princes.

The Crimean War (1856), in which France and England attacked Russia, bolstered up the tottering Ottoman Empire for a time, but a great collapse came twenty years later. The Sultan had promised many reforms for his Christian subjects, but these promises bore no fruit; and in 1875–1876, the Serbs in Bosnia and the Bulgarians rose for independence. There followed the horrible events long known as the "Bulgarian Atrocities." Turkish soldiers destroyed a hundred Bulgarian villages with every form of devilish torture imaginable, and massacred 30,000 people, carrying off also thousands of Christian girls into terrible slavery.

**"Bulgarian Atrocities" of 1876**

Then Serbia sprang to arms; and Tsar Alexander II of Russia declared war on Turkey (1877) — in full accord with the demand of his people. The universal horror in Western Europe at the crimes of the Turk prevented for a time any interference; and in ten months the Russian armies held the Turks at their mercy. The Peace of San Stefano (1878) arranged for a group of free Slav states in the peninsula and for the exclusion of Turkey from Europe except for the city of Constantinople.

**Russia's attempt to free the Balkans**

Alexander would probably have kept on to secure Constantinople, had he not seen a growing danger of European interference. And even now Europe did intervene. Austria wanted a share of Balkan plunder; England feared the advance of Russia toward her communications with India; and so the Peace of San Stefano was torn up. The Congress of Berlin (1878), dominated by Disraeli, the English Conservative, restored half the freed Christian populations to their old slavery under the Turk; handed over Bosnia to Austria to "administer" for Turkey, with a solemn provision that Austria should never annex the territory to her own realms; and left the whole Balkan district for the next third of a century in its old anarchy, with only slight gains for Serbia and Bulgaria. In fixing responsibility for the World War of 1914, this crime of 1878 cannot be wholly overlooked.

**Interference by the Congress of Berlin, 1878**

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It is only fair to note that while the English government under Disraeli was chiefly responsible for that crime, the English people promptly repudiated it at the polls. Gladstone came forth from retirement to stump England against the "shameful alliance with Abdul the Assassin"; and at the next elections (1880), Disraeli was overthrown by Gladstone with huge majorities. The wrong to the Balkans could not then be undone, but from this time England drew away from her old policy of courting Turkish friendship — wherein her place was quickly taken by Germany.

**Germany succeeds to England's place as the friend of the Turk**

No part of her non-European empire interested German ambition so deeply as her advance into Asia Minor. This began in earnest about 1900. Germany did not acquire actual title to territory there; but she did secure from Turkey various rich "concessions," guaranteeing her for long periods the sole right to build and operate great railroads and to develop valuable mining and oil properties. This "economic penetration" she expected confidently to turn into political sovereignty.

**In order to win control in Asia Minor**

To secure such concessions, Germany had sought the Turk's favor in shameful ways. She loaned to the Sultan German officers to reorganize and drill the Turkish armies, and supplied them with the most modern arms to keep down the rising Christian natives under his yoke — as in the Turkish war with Greece for Crete in 1897. And in 1895 when new Armenian massacres had roused England so that great public meetings were calling for war upon Turkey, Kaiser Wilhelm sent to the Sultan his photograph and that of his wife, to show German friendship and support. Germany knew that if she could keep this position of defender of the tottering Ottoman Empire, she could before long make that Empire into a vassal state.

**Germany joins in Austria's policy against a "Greater Serbia"**

The prospect of German dominance in Asia Minor brought Germany and Austria into closer sympathy in their Balkan policies. Austria's interference in those regions had been purely bad. She aimed to keep the little Balkan states weak and mutually hostile to one another, and especially to prevent the growth of a "Greater Serbia," which might attract to itself

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Austria's dissatisfied Slav subjects. Now (1898, 1899), Germany obtained concessions from Turkey for a railway from "Berlin to Bagdad," to open up the fabulously rich Oriental trade. A powerful Serbia, through which that line must pass, might have checked that project. Thenceforward Germany was ready to back Austria unreservedly in Balkan aggression, or to use her as a cat's paw there. And in return for support in the Balkans, Austria permitted herself to sink virtually into a vassal state of Germany, following blindly her lead in all other foreign relations.

**The "Mittel-Europa" dream**

Such was the origin of the German dream of a "Mittel-Europa" empire, reaching across Europe from the North Sea to the Aegean and the Black Seas, and on through Asia Minor to the Euphrates. This meant German leadership over Austria and Turkey and some sort of control by some of these states over the Balkans. If this dream could be established upon a solid basis — and it very nearly was done — there would be created a supreme world power, before which states like France would sink into utter insignificance.

**Austria annexes Bosnia**

In 1908 came a step toward fulfilling the plan. Taking advantage of internal dissensions in Turkey, Austria formally annexed Bosnia, in flat contradiction to her solemn pledges. This was not only a brutal stroke at the sanctity of treaties, but also it seemed a fatal blow to any hope for a reunion of that Slav district with Serbia. Serbia protested earnestly, and was supported by Russia. But the Kaiser "took his stand in shining armor by the side of his ally," as he himself put it; and Russia, still weak from her defeat by Japan and from her revolution of 1906, had to back down. Serbia was then forced by Austria's rough threats to make humiliating apologies. It is not strange that secret societies at once grew up in Serbia pledged to hostility to the "odious and greedy northern neighbor who holds millions of Serb brothers in chains."

Then came two events less favorable to the Teutonic designs.

1. The first came from Italy. That state was eager to use the army and navy it had been maintaining at crushing cost,

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and it had long seen its ambitions for colonial empire balked. In 1911, seeking excuse in the ill treatment of some Italian traders in Tripoli, Italy declared war on Turkey and wrested from her that African province along with various Aegean islands. This act followed so closely the precedents by which France and Germany had been building up colonial empires that "Europe" was constrained to permit the deed with only mild protests. Italy's easy success inflamed her imperialists, however, into putting forward programs for further expansion in the Aegean, in Asia Minor, and especially in Albania just across the Adriatic; and all of these designs were exceedingly distasteful to her two allies in the Triple Alliance.

**The Italian war with Turkey, 1911**

2. And Italy's victory encouraged another attack upon Turkey. United action by the mutually hostile Balkan states had seemed impossible. But in 1912, Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece suddenly joined in a war to drive the Turk out of Europe — and to divide his possessions there among themselves. Serbia was to have northern Albania, with its seaports; Montenegro, the port of Scutari; Greece, southern Albania and a small strip of Macedonian coast; and Bulgaria the bulk of Macedonia.

**The Balkan War of 1912**

The allies won swift victories and in a few months were almost at the gates of Constantinople. "Europe" intervened to arrange the peace terms. Italy, like Austria, was hostile to a Greater Serbia; and at the insistence of these powers backed by Germany, a new Kingdom of Albania was created, shutting off Serbia once more from the sea she had reached, while Montenegro was forced, by threat of war, to give up to Albania Scutari, which she had conquered. Turkey was to surrender, mostly to Bulgaria, her remaining territory in Europe except for Constantinople. Germany had carried her points in this settlement; but her ally, Turkey, had collapsed, and events were at once to show that in siding with Bulgaria she had "put her money on the wrong horse."

The treaty left Bulgaria almost the only gainer. The cheated allies demanded that she now share her gains with them. She

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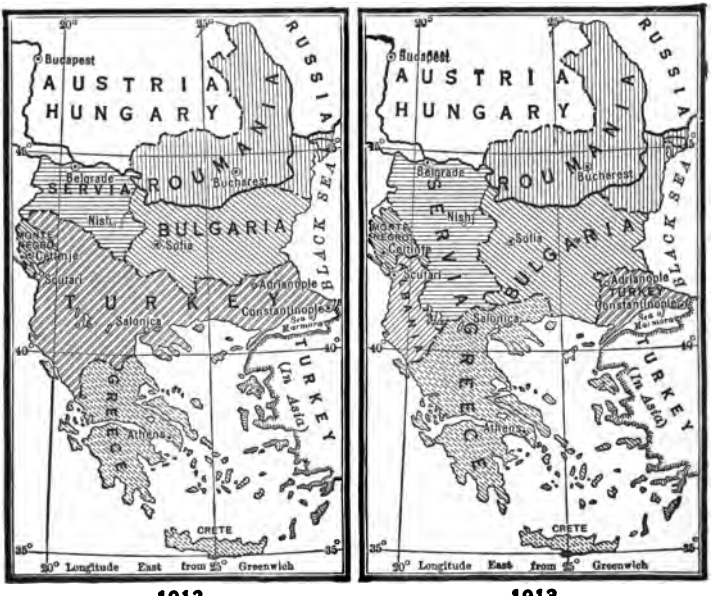
**The Second Balkan War, 1913**

refused; and at once (June, 1913) followed "the Second Balkan War." Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, and Roumania attacked Bulgaria. The Turks seized the chance to reoccupy Adrianople, and were permitted to keep it. In a month Bulgaria was crushed, and a new division of booty was arranged. Greece




THE BALKAN STATES.

won the richest prize, including the city of Saloniki; but each of the other allies secured gains in the "July War."

**The Balkans in 1913**

This contest left Roumania the largest Balkan state, with about seven and a half million people. Then came Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria, each with about four and a half million. Montenegro had risen to nearly a half million. Albania counted 800,000; and remaining "Turkey in Europe," nearly two million. All these nations have a frightful amount of illiteracy, and none has much wealth. All had a legislature elected by manhood suffrage, and Greece and Roumania had

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considerable real political freedom. In the other lands, the monarchs were almost absolute.

The Balkan nations came out of the two wars not only terribly exhausted, but hating one another with ferocious intensity. Especially did Bulgar now hate Serb and Greek; and each side, with too much truth, accused the other of wanton butcheries and outrages during the war quite as bad as had ever been suffered from the Turk. Serbia, too, was still cheated of her proper desire for an outlet on the Adriatic — her only natural gateway to the outside world — and she resented fiercely the Austrian and Italian policy which had so balked her. More openly than ever before, in the months that followed, enthusiastic Serb patriots talked of recovering from Austria the Slav provinces of Dalmatia, Croatia, and Bosnia, for a South Slav state; and this talk was encouraged by hope of Russian aid, — a hope long fostered by secret Russian intrigue.

To this pass the unhappy Balkan lands had been brought by the evil-starred Congress of Berlin, thirty-five years before, and by the greed and rivalries of the Great Powers since that time. The Balkans had been made a seed ground for war, and in many ways the wars of 1912–1913 prepared the occasion for the world struggle that began in the next year. Austria felt deeply humiliated by the outcome of the Second Balkan War, and was planning to redress her loss of prestige by striking Serbia savagely on the first occasion. Prince Lichnowsky, German ambassador at London, tells us now that only England's honest desire for peace, and her coaxing Montenegro and Serbia into submission in 1913 at the close of the First Balkan War, prevented a world war then. A year later, England's efforts to a like end failed.

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## CHAPTER IV

### GERMANY WILLS THE WAR

German war propaganda at home

The *occasion* of the war, it has just been said, was found in the Balkan situation; but for the *cause* we must turn back to Germany. For nearly half a century that country had been ruled by a Prussian despotism resting upon a bigoted, arrogant oligarchy of birth, and a greedy, scheming oligarchy of money. That rule had conferred on Germany many benefits. It had cared for the people as zealously as the herdsman cares for the flocks he expects to shear. But in doing so it had amazingly transformed the old peace-loving, gentle German people.

It had taught that docile race (1) to bow to Authority, rather than to Right;[1] (2) to believe Germany stronger, wiser, better than "decaying" England, "decadent and licentious" France, "uncouth and anarchic" Russia, or "money-serving" America; (3) to be ready to accept a program, at the word of command, for imposing German *Kultur* upon the rest of the world *by force;* (4) to regard war, even aggressive war, not as horrible and sinful, but as beautiful, noble, desirable, and right, — the final measure of a nation's worth, and the divinely appointed means for saving the world by German conquest; and finally (5) to disregard ordinary morality, national or individual, whenever it might interfere with the victory of the "Fatherland."

Insensibly to most of the rest of the world, this rabid and diseased patriotism of the Germans had become a menace to freedom and civilization. It was the strangest doctrine of national pride the world ever heard. There were not wanting German writers to claim that Joan of Arc, Dante, and Jesus

[1] Observers have often confounded this trait "with respect for law," — its precise opposite.



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himself owed their merits to German blood — along with like astounding assumptions of German descent to explain Voltaire, Alexander the Great, and Julius Caesar. Napoleon even, it was urged by some enthusiastic German patriots, must have been descended from the German Vandals.

The viciousness of these German teachings about war must be shown briefly "out of their own mouths":

"Out of their own mouths"

"**War is the noblest and holiest expression of human activity.** For us, too, the glad, great hour of battle will strike. Still and deep in the German heart must live the joy of battle and the longing for it. Let us ridicule to the utmost the old women in breeches who fear war and deplore it as cruel and revolting. No; war is beautiful. Its august sublimity elevates the human heart beyond the earthly and the common. In the cloud palace above sit the heroes Frederick the Great and Blücher; and all the men of action — the great Emperor, Moltke, Roon, Bismarck — are there as well, but not the old women who would take away our joy in war. . . . *That is the heaven of young Germany.*" — *Jung Deutschland*, October, 1913 (the official organ of the "Young German League," an organization corresponding in a way to our Boy Scouts).

"Germany's mission is to rejuvenate exhausted Europe by a diffusion of Germanic blood." — *School and Fatherland*, 1913 (a school manual).

"Our fathers have left us much to do. . . . **To-day it is for Germany to arise from a European to a world power.** . . . Humanitarian dreams are imbecility. . . . Right and wrong are notions indispensable in *private* life. **The German people are always right, because they number 87,000,000 souls.**" — TANNENBERG, *Gross-Deutschland*, 1913.

"We are the salt of the earth. . . . God has called us to civilize the world. . . . We are the missionaries of human progress." — WILHELM II, speech at Bremen, March 22, 1900.

"Even in the distance, and on the farther side of the ocean, without Germany and the German Emperor, no great decision *dare* henceforth be taken." — WILHELM II, at Kiel, July 3, 1900.

"It is to the empire of the world that the German genius aspires." — WILHELM II, address, June 20, 1902.

"The world owes its civilization to Germany alone. . . . The time is near when the earth must be conquered by the Germans." — WIRTH, *Weltmacht in der Geschichte* (1901).

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"Ye shall love peace as a means to new wars, and the short peace better than the long. . . . You say, a good cause hallows even war; but I tell you, **a good war hallows every cause.**" — NIETZSCHE, *Of Wars and Warriors.* (Nietzsche is a leader of German thought.)

"War is part of the divinely appointed order. . . . War is both justifiable and moral, and the idea of perpetual peace is not only impossible but also immoral." — TREITSCHKE, *Politics*, 1916, II, 597, 599. (Treitschke for many years had been a leader among German historians.)

"We must strenuously combat the peace propaganda. . . . War is a political necessity. . . . Without war there could be neither racial nor cultural progress.

"*Might is the supreme right*, and what is right is decided by war.

"It is presumptuous to think a weak nation is to have the same right to live as a powerful and vigorous nation.

"The inevitableness and . . . the blessedness of war, as the indispensable law of development, must be repeatedly emphasized." — BERNHARDI, a Prussian general, in his book, *The Next War*, in 1912.

"It is only by trust in our good sword that we shall be able to maintain that place in the sun which belongs to us, *and which the world does not seem very willing to allow us.*" — CROWN PRINCE, in *Deutschland in Waffen*, 1913.

"Do not forget the civilizing task which Providence assigns us. Just as Prussia was destined to be the nucleus of Germany, so the new Germany shall be the nucleus of a future Empire of the West. . . . We will successively annex Denmark, Holland, Belgium, . . . and finally northern France. . . . No coalition in the world can stop us." — SCHELLENDORF, Prussian War-Minister, in 1872.

"The salvation of Germany can be attained only by the annihilation of the smaller states." — TREITSCHKE, *Politics.*

And so on almost without end. Says Guy Stanton Ford in his Foreword to *Conquest and Kultur*,[1] a notable collection of these evil teachings:

[1] A volume of 171 pages that should be in every school library. Issued by the United States Committee on Public Information, and printed at Washington by the Government Printing Office.

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"It is a motley throng who are here heard in praise of war and international suspicion and conquest and intrigue and devastation — emperors, kings, princes, poets, philosophers, educators, journalists, legislators, manufacturers, militarists, statesmen. Line upon line, precept upon precept, they have written this ritual of envy and broken faith and rapine. Before them is the war god to whom they have offered up their reason and their humanity; behind them, the misshapen image they have made of the German people, leering with bloodstained visage over the ruins of civilization."

True, in other lands, even in America, lonely voices are heard speaking this same doctrine of insolent and ruthless Might. But in these other lands any such occasional voice is smothered at once by storms of indignant rebuke. In Germany, for fifty years, this war-worship encountered almost no protest — except a feeble one from the Socialists. True, again, no great country — not England or France or America — has been *wholly* free from greed for territory and for trade, — just such greed as lies at the root of most wars. But in these lands the time is past when public opinion will support an aggressive war, especially with a civilized people, waged *openly and avowedly* to satisfy such low ambitions. **Meanwhile, Germany, led by her war-besotted prophets, had been zealously making ready** for just such wars of greed.

No one must think that this teaching was mere talk. Said a member of the American Embassy in Belgium: "They [the Germans] fight, not because they are forced to, but because, curiously enough, they believe much of their talk. That is one of the dangers of the Germans to which the world is exposed: they really believe much of what they say." (Vernon Kellogg in the *Atlantic Monthly*, August, 1917.)

**Testimony from a German Liberal**

Ottfried Nippold, a Liberal professor in one of the German universities, shocked by the prevalence of this evil teaching, published a book against it in 1913. Said he, "A systematic stimulation of the war spirit is going on. . . . War is represented to us not merely as a possibility that might arise, but as a necessity that must come, and the sooner the better. . . . To them [the war party] war is quite a normal

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institution, not a means to be resorted to only in case of great necessity."

**And from a French secret agent**

And a French secret agent who had spent much time in studying opinion in Germany made an exhaustive report to his own government in a secret document in 1913. In a summary, he listed among the forces making for war:

(1) The junkers, "who wish to escape the (new) taxes" that must be extended to their class if peace continues, and who "realize with dread the growing power of democracy and of the Socialists, and consider their own class rule doomed" without war.

(2) The capitalist class — the manufacturers of big guns and armor plate; the merchants who demand bigger markets; "all who regard war as good business," including those manufacturers who declare that the difficulties between them and their workmen originate in France, "the home of revolutionary ideas of freedom."

(3) The universities which teach war philosophy.

The same report declared: "There are forces making for peace, but they are unorganized, and have no popular leaders. They comprise *the bulk of the artisans and peasants;* but they have almost no influence. They are *silent* social forces, passive and defenseless against the infection of a wave of warlike feeling."

**German hatred for England**

And even those parts of the population not easily converted to the doctrine of aggressive war — the peasants and the Socialist city workers — were at least taught, by constant iteration, to hate England because of her leadership in trade, and to fear Russia's growing numbers, and so to accept the idea that war was unavoidable.

True, wherever the English flag floated, German traders and German ships were given freely every chance open to English traders, in honest accord with England's advanced doctrine of free trade and free seas. But English enterprise still led in world commerce. German conceit could explain this only by belief in some secret, gigantic trickery by their rivals.

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Moreover the molders of German opinion taught that England hated and feared Germany, and would welcome a chance to destroy her. Between 1912 and 1914, to be sure, the German ambassador to England, Prince Lichnowsky,[1] repeatedly assured his government of England's friendly and pacific feeling. English manufacturers and merchants, he said, felt no bitter envy of the swift advance of German prosperity, but saw instead that such advance made Germany a better customer for English products. In 1912 English statesmen suggested that the two countries should cease their ruinous race in building warships. Lichnowsky wrote to Berlin that the proposal was made in perfect good faith. England, he said, would undoubtedly try to keep her lead in naval power, so absolutely necessary to her safety as an island state, but she had no desire to use her navy except to preserve peace. But these communications, so out of tune with the purpose of the German government, never reached the German people.

**English attempts to keep the peace**

In 1912 there were other long negotiations between German and English governments, of which the people at that time knew nothing. The English statesman offered to sign a declaration that England would not be a party to any *attack* upon Germany. This did not satisfy the Germans. They insisted that England should promise neutrality in a European war, no matter how it might come. To have done this would have been to desert France, and to make it more likely that Germany would attack. Very properly, and in the interests of peace, the English government refused such a shameful compact.

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[1] This remarkable German, a cultivated and able Liberal, wholly free from the spirit of German jingoism, had been selected for the position apparently in order to blind English opinion as to Germany's warlike aims. When the war came, he found himself in disgrace with the Kaiser and the German court; and at the opening of the second year of the war (August, 1916) he wrote an account of his London mission for *private* circulation among his friends, to justify himself in their eyes. A copy fell into the hands of the Allies during the next year, and became at once one of the most valuable proofs of the German guilt in forcing on the war.

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**Germany's preparedness**

As Bismarck prepared his "Trilogy of Wars," of which he boasted so insolently, in order to make Prussia mistress of Germany, so after 1890, even more deliberately, Kaiser Wilhelm and his advisers prepared vaster war to make Germany mistress of the world. They hoarded gold in the war chest; heaped up arms and munitions, and huge stocks of raw materials, to manufacture more; secretly tried out new military inventions on a vast scale, — submarines, zeppelins, poison gases, new explosives; created a navy in a race to best England's; bound other ruling houses to their own by marriage or by placing Hohenzollerns directly on the throne — in Russia, Greece, Bulgaria, Roumania; reorganized the Turkish Empire and filled offices in the army and navy there with Germans; permeated every great country, in the Old World and the New, with an insidious and treacherous system of spies in the guise of friendly business shielded by innocent hospitality; and secured control of banking syndicates and of newspapers in foreign lands, especially in Italy and America, so as to influence public opinion.

In June, 1914, the Kiel Canal was finally opened to the passage of the largest ships of war. Now Germany was ready, and her war lords were growing anxious to use their preparation before it grew stale — and before France and Russia, somewhat alarmed now, should have time to put into effect their new army laws (above). Moreover war, better than anything else, would quiet the rising feeling in Germany, especially among the Socialists, against militarism.[1]

**Why Germany did not fight sooner**

Germany, we know now, had seriously considered precipitating war on several recent occasions connected with *colonial* questions[2] in Africa; but her leaders prudently preferred a first

[1] See C. Altschul's *German Militarism and Its German Critics*, No. 13 in the War Information Series.

[2] The two Morocco crises, 1905–1906 and 1911, were each caused by a brutal German show of force. War was averted the first time only by studious French moderation, and, the second time, by England's plain declaration that she would side with France. See War Encyclopedia under "Morocco," and Harding's *Great War*, Ch. ii, III.

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war in which England would not be likely to join, so that the Teutonic empires might have only France and Russia to deal with at one time. Almost any colonial problem would concern England, who had been a chief party in the many European conferences that had adjusted colonial disputes. In the Balkans, however, England had shown no selfish interest for many years, and it was easy to believe that she would not fight upon a Balkan question.

**The Serajevo murders, June 28, 1914**

And now came just the kind of occasion the German war lords wished. Ever since its unjust seizure by Austria, Bosnia had been seething with conspiracies against Austrian rule. June 28, 1914, the heir to the Austrian throne, the Archduke Francis, and his wife, were assassinated while in Bosnia by some of these conspirators. The Serbian government had warned the Archduke not to visit Bosnia, fearing an attack upon him; but the Austrian government, strangely, had permitted him to go without any special precautions.

Europe was aghast. Horror at the dastardly murder was mingled with fear of a great European war. Austria, it was known, was greedy for Serb territory. But if she used this murder as an excuse to attack Serbia, Russia was bound, by honor and by her interests, to defend that little Slav country. And a conflict between Austria and Russia could not but draw in at once Germany and France, and perhaps others.

**The month of quiet**

Austrian papers loudly declared Serbia responsible for the murder, inasmuch as she had not suppressed societies of conspirators within her borders agitating for Bosnian liberation. But a month passed quietly before the Austrian government made any formal demand upon Serbia, and European fears died down. That month, we know now on German evidence,[1] was

[1] July 5 there was held at Potsdam a secret conference of military authorities, bankers, and manufacturers of munitions, and so on; and a war program was decided upon. When the story leaked out, German papers denied it vehemently; but before the war closed, the truth of the meeting was well established by German evidence. The money kings asked a month's delay that they might "mobilize" their finances, turning foreign bonds into cash.

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used in ceaseless but secret preparation to strike. Then, absolutely without warning, Austria sent to little Serbia an "ultimatum" harsh almost beyond belief, and in the next twelve days a world war was launched.

**The Austrian ultimatum, July 23**

Austria made ten demands, which may be summed up under three heads:

1. That Serbia suppress all agitation against Austria in newspapers, schools, and organizations of any sort.
2. That she agree to dismiss from her schools, from her army, and from her administration any teacher or official to whom Austria might object.
3. That she permit Austrian officials to become part of the Serbian government so far as necessary to attend to these foregoing provisions, and that she allow such officials to sit in Serbian courts to judge Serbians accused of connection with the murders of June 28.

The Austrian ambassador at Belgrade told the Serbian government that it must accept these terms without reservations *within 48 hours*. The German Socialist, Karl Liebknecht, at once said bravely that the demands "were more brutal than any ever made upon any civilized state in all human history" and that they were "intended to provoke war" (*Vorwärts*, July 25); but the German government stoutly supported Austria. Serbia, after trying vainly to get the time limit extended, made a humble and conciliatory reply, accepting the harsh Austrian terms except those under 3 above. These plainly would have reduced her to a mere vassal of Austria. But even these she offered to refer to longer negotiation or to arbitration. This reply the Austrian ambassador declared "dishonest and evasive," and he at once left Serbia.

**Serbia's conciliatory reply**

The Austrian demands had been sent to the Serbian government in the evening of July 23, too late to allow any consideration until the next day — especially as the Serbian ministers were scattered over the country in a political campaign. The Serbian reply was handed to the Austrian am-

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bassador July 25, at 5:58 P.M. He and his whole staff left Belgrade from the railroad station at 6:30. Plainly, he knew that his terms could not be accepted. He and his staff must have been packed and ready, hat in hand.

England's attempt for peace balked by Germany

England, France, and Russia had been making every effort to get these extreme concessions from Serbia, in the interest of peace. Now England repeatedly asked Germany to help preserve peace by getting Austria to accept Serbia's submission or by referring the matter to arbitration, or at least to an informal discussion among representatives of the Great Powers, so as to try to come to an agreement. Germany professed to desire peace but found objections to each suggestion made by England, while she failed to accept England's request that she herself suggest some plan.

The German ambassador at London, Lichnowsky, believed that if his country had wished peace, a settlement could easily have been secured, and, we know now, he "strongly backed" the English proposals; but in vain. "We insisted on war," he says in his account to his friends; "the impression grew that we wanted war under any circumstances. It was impossible to interpret our attitude in any other way." And again, "I had to support in London a policy the wickedness of which I recognized. That brought down vengeance upon me, because it was a sin against the Holy Ghost." [1]

The ten days, July 28 – August 2

So passed the first four days, while the world held its breath. July 28, Austria declared war upon Serbia. Russia at once began to mobilize [2] troops on the Austrian frontier, — notify-

[1] Remember that this was written when the war was only a year old. See above, p. 27, note.

[2] In each European country "mobilization" was understood. Each of the millions of men in the Active Reserves would receive notice — through local authorities, who had been notified a few hours earlier by the central government, to report at a given hour at a given place. At that time and place the necessary officers would be present to organize the men, as they arrived, into military units; and transportation would be ready to move each unit to a larger rendezvous. Arms, munitions, cannons, machine guns, food and clothing, and transportation for all these things must also be in readiness.

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ing Germany that this act was in no way hostile to her, and also that no warlike action would be taken against Austria so long as that country permitted Serbia to continue negotiations for peace. Germany brusquely demanded that Austria be allowed her will with Serbia without Russian interference.

**Austria hesitates**

**Germany forces the war**

July 30 and 31, Russia offered, twice, to stop her slow preparations if Austria would promise to exact only a moderate punishment from Serbia and not to destroy that little country's independence. Now for the first time Austria seemed ready to yield somewhat. And so Germany, which all along had willed the war, had to come into the open to force it on. For some days (ever since July 21) she had secretly been concentrating troops on her western frontier, ready to strike France; and on the evening of July 29 a secret war council at Potsdam overruled the Kaiser's last eleventh-hour hesitation. August 1, Germany declared war upon Russia,[1] after an insulting twelve-hour ultimatum demanding instant demobilization.

At the same time Germany gave France 18 hours in which to promise to abandon Russia to her fate, and was ready further to demand that France surrender certain fortresses during the war as a guarantee of good faith. The next day (August 2) German troops occupied neutral Luxemburg and began to mass upon the Belgian frontier; and the German government gave Belgium 12 hours (7 P.M. to 7 A.M.) to decide whether she would permit German troops to cross her territory so as to find an unguarded road into France. August 3, receiving no reply from France to her dishonorable proposals, Germany declared war upon that country and invaded Belgium, charging falsely that

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[1] See Davis' *Roots of the War*, 510–512, for the story of a trick by which Germany had frightened the Tsar into a more warlike attitude. See also Harding, *Great War*, Ch. III. Liebknecht at the time declared the fact: "The decision rests with William II. . . . But the war-lords are at work . . . without a qualm of conscience . . . to bring about a monstrous world war, the devastation of Europe" (*Vorwärts*, July 30, 1914). A few months later, Liebknecht tried to distribute leaflets among the German people to tell them how the government had suppressed knowledge of the peaceful aims of Russia and England.

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France had violated German territory — in face of the fact that, to avoid any clash through hotheadedness, France had withdrawn her troops everywhere six miles within her borders.

**Hypocrisy of the German counter-charges**

Reckless falsehood and hypocritical charges against others were the method used by Germany throughout to justify herself. Says Brand Whitlock, American Ambassador to Belgium, recounting a long list of such pretended excuses in those days: — "When he (the German) wished to invade Belgium, he said (falsely) that French aviators had thrown bombs on Nuremberg [meaning that they had flown over Belgium to do so]. When he wished to sack and destroy Louvain, he said (falsely) that civilians had fired on him. When he wished to use asphyxiating gas, he said (falsely) the French were using it. The thing that vitiated the whole character of modern Germany . . . was the lie." Upright Germans themselves saw this. As early as 1909 the Socialist Scheidemann dared to say in the Reichstag that lying was "the most characteristic trait of the Hohenzollerns." And all will remember how Bismarck boasted of the forgery by which he tricked France into war in his day.

**Belgium resists**

Germany had promised, in case Belgium consented to the passage of her troops, to make good all damage, but had threatened the most savage consequences if her demand were refused. Belgium had replied with heroic dignity. Her neutrality had been solemnly and repeatedly guaranteed by the Great Powers, including Prussia,[1] and now she herself was ready to suffer martyrdom to defend that neutrality, as she was in honor bound to do.

Belgium also at once appealed to England; and England (August 3) let Germany know that the invasion of Belgium must stop or England would declare war, as bound by the most solemn obligations. The German Chancellor, Bethmann-

[1] Prussia was a party to the original treaty of 1839, guaranteeing Belgium from invasion by any country, and also to its renewal in 1870; and the German Empire in 1871 accepted for itself all Prussia's international obligations.

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Holweg, was grievously chagrined. He had believed that "shop-keeping England" would refuse to fight; and now he expressed bitterly to the departing English Ambassador his amazement that England should enter the war "just for a scrap of paper."

The next day (August 4) in his address to the Reichstag, the Chancellor himself admitted Germany's guilt. "Necessity knows no law. Gentlemen, this [invasion of Belgium] is a breach of international law. . . . We knew France stood ready for an invasion [a false statement]. The wrong — I speak openly — the wrong we thereby commit, we will try to make good as soon as our military ends have been attained."

**England "goes in"**

The same day England "went in." England, it is to be hoped, would not in any case have looked on, to see France crushed, but she might have held off too long except for the German crime against Belgium. This was Germany's fatal blunder. And the consciousness that she had blundered called out among almost all classes a frenzy of hate for England — whose overthrow in a later war, it was now openly avowed, had been the real goal all along. France was to have been crushed first, to leave England alone and to enable Germany to launch her attack upon England from near-by French ports like Calais. From this time, too, the credulous German masses were taught zealously that England had willed the war from the first and had tricked a peace-loving Germany into it! "May God blast England" became the almost universal form of daily greeting.

**Germany furious**

Germany had indeed been tricked, but only by her own greed and conceit and her own silly contempt for others. After all, however, Germany was prepared "to the last shoe lace," and her opponents, with all the warning they had had, were not prepared. Least of all, was England ready for war. She had no army worth mentioning — only a few scattered and distant garrisons; and, what was worse, she had no arms for her eager volunteers, and no factories worth mention to make munitions.

Soon both parties claimed to be fighting for peace. But

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War aims of the two parties

German leaders made it plain that they looked only to a sort of peace won by making Germany so supreme in the world that no other power could possibly dream of withstanding or disobeying her. The old balance of power theory was bad enough; but infinitely worse was this German theory of peace through slavery. Said Chancellor Bethmann-Holweg (May 28, 1915): "We must endure till we have gained every possible guarantee, so that none of our enemies — not alone, not united — will again dare a trial of strength with us."

Opposed to this ideal of a peace by force, English statesmen — like President Wilson later — set up at once the ideal of a peace of righteousness. Said Premier Asquith, November 9, 1914:

"We shall never sheathe the sword, which we have not lightly drawn, until Belgium recovers in full measure all and more than all that she has sacrificed, until France is adequately secured against the menace of aggression, until the rights of the smaller nationalities of Europe are placed upon an unassailable foundation, and until military domination of Prussia is wholly and finally destroyed."

And said Sir Edward Grey, the English Foreign Minister, January 26, 1916, in the House of Commons:

"The great object to be attained . . . is that there shall not again be this sort of militarism in Europe, which in time of peace causes the whole of the continent discomfort by its continual menace, and then, when it thinks the moment has come that suits itself, plunges the continent into war."

And again, six months later to an American newspaperman:

"What we and our allies are fighting for is a free Europe. We want a Europe free, not only from the domination of one nationality by another, but from hectoring diplomacy and the peril of war, free from the constant rattling of the sword in the scabbard, from perpetual talk of shining armor and war lords. We are fighting for equal rights; for law, justice, peace; for civilization throughout the world as against brute force."

For Further Reading. — In the flood of printed matter regarding the background of the war, the difficulty is to select. The

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following suggestions are made with particular view to their permanent value and at the same time to their suitability for the general reader:—*I Accuse* (by an anonymous German), esp. 26–141; J. E. Barker's *Modern Germany*, 297–317, 798–829; W. S. Davis' *Roots of the War*, Chs. xvii, xviii, xxiv; J. W. Gerard's *My Four Years in Germany*, Chs. iv, v; Prince Lichnowsky's *Memoirs;* Gibbons' *New Map of Europe*, esp. pp. 1–367. For evidence that the German government was preparing for immediate war even before June 28, see S. B. Harding's *Great War*, Ch. iii, V, VI, and on Belgium's neutrality, the same, Ch. vi, III.

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# CHAPTER V

## THE FIRST YEAR, 1914

The German plan

The Germans had planned a short war. They expected (1) to go through Belgium swiftly with little opposition, and to take Paris within four weeks; (2) then to swing their strength against Russia before that unwieldy power could get into the war effectively, and crush her; and (3), with the Channel forts at command, to bring England easily to her knees, if she should really enter the war.

Foiled by Belgium

Thanks to Belgium, the first of their expectations fell through — and the others fell with it. The Germans had allowed *six* days to march through Belgium. But for sixteen days little Belgium, alone in her agony, under the command of her hero king, Albert, held back mighty Germany. When the French began mobilization, after August 2, they began it to meet an honest attack through Lorraine; but before the Belgians were quite crushed, the French managed to shift enough force to the north, along with a hurried and poorly equipped "Expeditionary Army" of 100,000 from England, to delay the German advance through northern France for three weeks more — ground that the German plan had allowed eight days to win. Tremendously outnumbered, outflanked, trampled into the dust in a ceaseless series of desperate battles, the thin lines of Allied survivors fell back doggedly toward the Marne. There Joffre, the French commander-in-chief, was collecting all resources for his final stand.

The battle of the Marne

The Germans drove on furiously, outrunning even their supply trains. September 3, the French government withdrew to Bordeaux. But September 6, when the boastful invaders were in sight of the towers of Paris, only 20 miles away, their



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guns thundering almost in the suburbs, the French and English turned at bay in a colossal battle along a two-hundred-mile front. Joffre issued to all corps commanders his famous order, "The hour has come to let yourselves be killed rather than to yield ground. Troops must let themselves be shot down where they stand rather than retreat." The crisis came on the fourth day when the Germans, anxious to use their superior numbers in an enveloping movement around both the Allied wings, had perilously weakened their center. With true military genius, General Foch, a trusted lieutenant of Joffre's, divined the situation, and hurled his exhausted troops desperately at that key-position. Even then only splendid resolution won the day. Joffre had sent an anxious inquiry to ask Foch's situation. The dogged Foch telegraphed back hastily: "My right is beaten back; my center is crushed; my left has been repulsed. *Situation excellent.* I am attacking again with my left." And when a subordinate reported, "My men are exhausted," Foch replied curtly, "So are the enemy. Attack!" And this time, the attack broke the invader's line.

To save themselves from destruction, the Germans retreated hastily to the line of the Aisne. Later attempts by them to resume the offensive failed; but the Allies were too exhausted to dislodge them. Both sides "dug in" along a 360-mile front, from Switzerland to the North Sea. Then began a "trench warfare," new in history. The positions stabilized, and, on the whole, in spite of repeated and horrible slaughter, were not materially altered on this Western front until the final months of the war four years later.

**New methods of warfare**

New and ever more terrible ways of fighting marked this warfare, with increasing ferocity and horror from month to month. Ordinary cannon were replaced by huge new guns whose high explosives blasted the whole landscape into indescribable and irretrievable ruin — burying whole battalions alive, and forming great craters where snipers found the best shelter in future advances. Ordinary defense works were elaborated into many lines of connected trenches beneath the

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earth, protected by mazy entanglements of barbed wire and strengthened at intervals by bomb-proof "dugouts" and underground chambers of heavy timbers and cement. To plow through these intrenchments, cavalry gave way to monstrous, heavily armored motor-tanks. New guns belched deadly poison gases, slaying whole regiments in horrible strangling torture when the Germans first used this devilish device, in April, 1915, — until English and French chemists invented gas masks that afforded fair protection if donned in time — and infernal "flame-throwers" wrapped whole ranks in liquid fire. Scouting was done, and gunfire directed, by airplanes equipped with new apparatus for wireless telegraphy and for photography; and daily these aërial scouts, singly or in fleets, met in deadly combat ten thousand feet above the ground, — combat that ended only when one or both went hurtling down in flames to crashing destruction. Worse than these terrors even, the soldiers dreaded the beastly filthiness of trench war; the never absent smell of rotting human flesh; the torture of vermin; the dreary monotony.

**The East front in 1914**

The original German plan had been wrecked at the Marne, and that name now ranks with Marathon. The Russians had mobilized more swiftly than friend or foe had believed possible, and were swarming into East Prussia threatening Austria. August 26 they were defeated ruinously at Tannenberg by Hindenburg, a Prussian veteran of 1870, with the most fearful slaughter ever known in one battle in all history; but against the Austrians they fared better. After winning a great battle on the frontier, they forced their way into Austrian Galicia and captured Lemberg. Germany was forced to divert troops from France to succor her Austrian ally during the rest of the campaign, and when the year 1914 closed, the Russians were holding their own in Poland, with good prospects of renewing the invasion of the Austrian realms.

Austria had another pressing job. The story of the hatching of the war makes clear why she felt it necessary promptly to

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crush Serbia. That little country of fighters, however, supplied with necessary munitions by the other Allies through Salonika, had repulsed two Austrian invasions, and now all Austrian soldiers were needed to meet the peril in Galicia.

**Turkey joins the Teutonic empires**

Meantime Turkey had joined the Central Powers. We know now that Turkey made a formal war alliance with Germany at the opening of the struggle (August 4); but it was thought best to keep this secret for a time. In October, however, two German warships, fleeing from an English squadron, received shelter within the Dardanelles. The German ambassador then carried through a fictitious sale of these ships to "neutral" Turkey; and, flying the Turkish flag but manned by their old crew and officers, the two vessels raided Russian Odessa. Accordingly, in November, England, France, and Russia declared war on Turkey. At this time, the Ottoman state was still shut off from its Teutonic allies by a broad belt of neutral or hostile Balkan territory, and, isolated as it was, England and Russia hoped soon to crush it.

**Germany turns back to the West front**

In the West, after it became plain that a deadlock had developed, the German government realized the need of attacking England directly without waiting to annihilate France. In August and September, British sea-power had swept German shipping from the seas. If the war was to be a long one, this strangling of German commerce would be decisive. Hence the attack upon England must be tried at once if any possible base could be won. As a necessary step, the Germans turned to complete their conquest of the Belgian coast. King Albert of Belgium and the bulk of his heroic little army were still holding Antwerp. The huge German siege guns now beat to powder the protecting forts, and the invaders captured that city on October 9, — though in their exulting parade they foolishly permitted the Belgian army to escape towards France. Immediately after, they secured the port of Ostend and most of the rest of the Belgian coast.

To attack England successfully, however, against her unconquerable fleet, Germany needed better and nearer ports for

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a base, — at least Dunkirk and Calais; and October 16 they began the four weeks' *Battle of the Yser* in order to force the last natural barrier protecting those Channel ports. Checked by the cutting of the dykes, they next brought their force against the thin English lines near Ypres. The gallant resistance offered the magnificent "Prussian Guards" in the *First Battle of Ypres* by the outnumbered and ill-armed English makes one of the most heroic stories in all history. In vain, day after day for a long month, with slight intervals for preparation, did the overwhelming German forces deliver their reckless mass attacks upon the opponents whom they had styled "a contemptible little army." They wore themselves down upon that dying but unconquered line without ever becoming able to deliver a knock-out blow, losing more men than the total English force; and winter conditions set in, November 17, with the desired ports still in the hands of the Allies.

**But fails at the Yser and at Ypres**

Thus closed the first war-season. On the west front, Germany had failed. The French government had come back to Paris, and the French army was in perfect condition. England's gallant first army had died devotedly to gain her time; but the time had been fairly well used. England reorganized herself for war — built new munition factories — though not enough, time was to prove; poured forth gold lavishly for Russia and France; saved and suffered and toiled and drilled at home, and put into the field eventually a splendid fighting force of six million men, — a million ready for the second year. England had looked upon the war as a "beastly" interruption; but she was rapidly reorganizing her life on a war basis. True, deceived by a stupid censorship, she had not yet grasped the full danger, and was sadly behind, especially in the output of high explosives. From the first, her superb navy swept the seas, keeping the boastful German navy bottled up in harbor or in the South Baltic, and gradually running down the few German raiders that at first escaped to prey on British commerce. This service of England to the world, if there had been no more, ought forever to win her the world's gratitude.

**Close of the first season**

**The English navy**

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The blockade of Germany was not enforced rigidly, for fear of offending American opinion, but already it was creating a serious food problem for Germany. And on the other hand, America's resources in food and munitions, closed to Germany by the English navy, were all available to the Allies. Except for the English navy, Germany would have won the war in the second year.

**England's daughter-commonwealths join**

Further, England's distant and peaceful daughter-commonwealths, — Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and even her Indian Empire, — were rousing themselves splendidly to the defense of their common civilization. And Japan, England's ally in the Orient, had entered the war, seizing Germany's holdings in China and many of her islands in the Pacific.

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# CHAPTER VI

## THE SECOND YEAR, 1915

The danger of Russian collapse

At the opening of 1915, the chief danger to England and France was their too great trust in Russia, — their belief that the Russian "steam-roller," fully prepared, would now crush its way to Berlin or at least into Hungary. As a matter of fact, there was no ground for this expectation. Russia was near the end of its supply of munitions, and its industries were too primitive to cope with longer war. The minister of war, too, had secretly sold himself to Germany and was doing his best to hinder military movements and to waste and misdirect the scanty supplies.[1] Similar treason permeated a large part of the official classes and the court circle, centering around the Hohenzollern wife of the Tsar.

The Germans understood this Russian situation — though the Allies did not — and accordingly they planned only to hold their trenches in the West and to concentrate their energies in putting Russia quickly out of the war.

Russia was almost isolated from the other Allies. Germany closed the Baltic; Turkey closed the Black Sea; Archangel was ice-closed during most of the year; and Vladivostok was so distant as to be almost negligible for the coming year. If Russia were to receive badly needed supplies, the Allies must force the Dardanelles and capture Constantinople. Success in this project in 1915 would have ended the war. The wavering Balkan states would have joined Russia. Turkey would have been crushed. The conglomerate, ill-cemented Austrian

Necessity that the Allies secure the Dardanelles

[1] Two years later this man was executed for high treason. Of Russia's four important munition factories, the largest was directly controlled, secretly, by Germany.



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empire would have been open to invasion on the south; and the Allies must have won.

**The attempt and failure**

Thus both parties planned now to transfer the decisive struggle to the East front. The Allies were able to strike first. In February, the Allied navy attacked the Dardanelles. The outer forts were taken or battered down, but the inner fortresses resisted successfully. In March a more formidable attack all but succeeded. Had the Allies known how exhausted the Turkish ammunition was, they might have opened the straits. Not informed of this, however, and discouraged by heavy losses in ships, the navy now waited nearly two months for the arrival of land forces to coöperate in storming the Turkish defenses. When the British transports arrived, late in April, the Turks were perfectly prepared. British and Australian troops were landed, with horrible loss, under destructive fire; but the heroic attempts of the Anzacs [1] to storm the fortresses of the Gallipoli Peninsula failed deplorably. In August the attempt was renewed, and came once more just short of decisive success. After this, there was no chance against the greatly strengthened Turkish positions.

**The German drive against Russia**

Meantime, in May, the Germans opened their drive against Russia in Galicia with the first enormous concentration of artillery in the war. The Russians were admirably commanded in the field, and they fought, as always, with reckless valor. But their cannon were useless from want of ammunition, and even with the infantry many a soldier had to wait until a comrade had fallen before he could get a gun to fight with. With amazing success, under the circumstances, their retreat was saved from becoming a rout. But the Austrians recaptured Lemberg in June, and the Germans took Warsaw early in August. The Teutonic armies then cleared most of eastern Poland of Russian garrisons before they halted their drive late in September, in order to attempt a more important drive on the southeast (below). Russia had lost an enormous

[1] *Australian New Zealand Auxiliary Corps.*

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number of lives, with a million and a half of prisoners; she had been driven out of a huge territory; and her offensive power had been destroyed for months to come.

**Trench war on the West**

On the West front, there was continuous trench fighting, with much loss of life, but the only important event of the year was the German offensive at Ypres (*Second Battle of Ypres*, April 17–May 17) when the English line was almost broken by the German asphyxiating gas, then first used in war. That the line held against this devilish attack was due largely to the splendid gallantry of the new Canadian divisions. Lack of high explosives kept the Allies from attempting a serious offensive until just before the season closed — in September — and the event proved that the supplies even then were insufficient to prepare the way for successful infantry attack, so that the only result was one more terrible lesson with pitiful sacrifice of lives.

**Bulgaria joins the Central Empires**

The Germans had stopped their triumphant progress into Russia only to avail themselves of a more attractive program. In October, Bulgaria finally joined the Central powers (fear of Russia gone), hoping to wreak vengeance on Serbia for 1913 and to make herself the ruling state in the Balkans. Her secretly prepared army invaded Serbia from the east while a huge Teutonic force attacked from the north. Serbia had counted upon her treaty of 1913 with Greece for protection against possible Bulgarian attack. But King Constantine of Greece, brother-in-law of the German Kaiser, now repudiated that treaty and dismissed his prime minister Venizelos for desiring to keep Greece faithful to her ally. A Franco-British army had been sent to Salonika, but, after the defection of Greece, it could accomplish nothing. In spite of their gallant resistance, the Serbs were overwhelmed. The survivors of their army made their way over the mountains of Albania to the coast, and were ferried across to Corfu by British ships. All of Serbia and Montenegro and much of Albania was occupied by the Bulgars and Teutons; and the Bulgarian atrocities toward the conquered populations during the next years exceeded anything those unhappy peoples had ever suffered from

**Serbia is crushed**

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the Turk. The military gain by Germany in this campaign was immense. She now dominated a solid broad belt of territory from Berlin and Brussels and Warsaw to Bagdad and Persia.

**Italy joins the Allies**

This gloomy second year of the war brought to the Allies only one gain. From the outset of the struggle, Italy had repudiated the Triple Alliance. The Teutonic powers, who had forced on the war without consulting her in the least particular, had not expected help from her, but they did hope that she would remain neutral. The sympathies of the liberty-loving Italian people, however, were overwhelmingly with the Allies; and the government saw its opportunity to recover the "unredeemed" Italian territory about Triest and Trent. It drove a hard bargain with the Allied governments, securing in a secret treaty (since known as the Secret Pact of London, April, 1915) promises for not only those districts but also for Dalmatia — at the expense of martyred Serbia. Then May 23, just when the Russian retreat was beginning, Italy declared war on Austria, and launched her armies in a drive across the Isonzo for Triest. But the Austrians had fortified the Alpine passes with every modern device, and for two years the Italians made little advance, in spite of much gallant fighting. The threat of their advance, however, kept large Austrian forces busy, and so lessened the pressure upon the Allies elsewhere at critical moments.

**Germany's "Frightfulness"**

This same year, 1915, saw also a serious extension of Germany's barbarous submarine warfare, with the invasion of neutral rights and the murder of neutral lives. This was to bring America into the war two years later, and so hasten the close; but it was only one more phase of the deliberately adopted German policy of "Frightfulness" which from the first had compelled the attention of the world outside Europe.

For centuries, international law had been building up rules of "civilized" war, so as to protect non-combatants and to preserve some shreds of humanity among even the fighters.

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But German military rulers, for some years, had referred slurringly to such "moderation" as a deceitful attempt on the part of the weak to protect themselves against the strong. Humane considerations the official German War Manual referred to as flabby sentimentality.[1]

The first practical application of this German doctrine of Frightfulness had been given to the world in 1900. In that year a force of German soldiers set out to join forces from other European countries and from the United States in restoring order in China, after the massacre of Europeans there in the Boxer Rebellion. July 27 the Kaiser bade his troops farewell at Bremerhaven in a set address. In the course of that brutal speech he commanded them: "Show no mercy! Take no prisoners! As the *Huns* made a name for themselves which is still mighty in tradition, *so may you* by your deeds so *fix the name of German* in China that no Chinese shall ever again dare to look at a German askance. . . . Open the way for *Kultur*." [2]

**The Kaiser's command to emulate the Huns**

At the opening of the World War, this "Hun" policy was put into effect in Western Europe. Never since the ancient blood-spattered Assyrian monarchs stood exultingly on pyramids of mangled corpses had the world seen so huge a crime. Belgium and northeastern France were devastated. Whole villages of innocent non-combatants were wiped out, — men, women, children, — burned in their houses or shot and bayoneted if they crept forth. All this by deliberate order of the "high

[1] Extracts in Harding, Ch. vii, IV.

[2] The troops reached China too late to be of use. American, Japanese, French, and Italian troops had already restored order. But the Germans made a number of savage "punitive expeditions" for booty and rapine. In these they indulged not merely in indiscriminate murder of innocent non-combatants, but even in many indescribable outrages upon women. General Chaffee, the commander of the United States troops, and the senior officer among the Western forces, called together the commanders of the other allies, and then as their spokesman interviewed Von Waldersee, the German commander. Von Waldersee declared haughtily that there would be no change in his policy. His soldiers "must have some chance to indulge themselves." Said Chaffee: "We have not come to make requests, but to tell you that this sort of thing must stop." It stopped.

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**Deliberate adoption of this policy in Belgium and France**

command," like the frightfulness of the old Assyrians, to break the morale of the enemy, to make it easy to hold the conquered territory with a few soldiers, and to terrify neighboring small peoples — Dutch, Danes, Swiss — so that they might not dare risk a like fate.

War always develops brutes; and the terrible nerve strain of this war undoubtedly tended, more than ordinary war, to paralyze the moral sense and the will. The German soldiers, too, more than the soldiers of the Allies, had been brutalized by bestial treatment from their officers, and, without orders, they committed thousands of nameless outrages upon girls, and Sioux-Indian mutilations upon captives. But this, horrible as it was, leaves less stain upon Germany than the calm decision for this policy in cold blood by the polished and easy-living German rulers.

**The Zeppelin raids**

In like fashion, Zeppelins raided England, not mainly to destroy military depots, but to drop bombs upon resident parts of London and upon peaceful villages, murdering women and children. In the years 1915–1917, their aircraft raids murdered nearly 4000 non-combatants without accomplishing any military purpose.[1] So, too, German airplanes bombed hospitals and Red Cross trains, assassinating doctors and nurses along with the wounded soldiers; and soon the submarines began to torpedo hospital ships, clearly marked as such. Nor is it easy to find any imaginable crime against the war customs of all civilized nations that was not committed and boasted of by Germany within a few months after this war began. No wonder that even neutral lands began to know Germans no longer by the kindly "Fritz" but only by "Hun" or "Boche."[2]

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[1] England long refused to adopt this barbarous policy, even for retaliation. She finally did so, somewhat later than France; but more efficient results were found in developing anti-aircraft guns and in the use of protecting airplanes, so that in the last years of the war a Zeppelin raid was too dangerous to be tried often.

[2] On all this, see *German War Practices* and *German Treatment of Conquered Territory*, volumes edited by Dana C. Munro and other well-known American historians, under the auspices of the Committee on Public Information.

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With German approval, and under the eyes of German officers, the Turks massacred a majority of *the Armenians*, and the Bulgarians massacred in wholesale fashion the non-combatant Serbian population. A word from Germany would have stopped these needless and revolting excesses against humanity, which were upon a scale even huger than Germany's own crimes in the West, but which were committed by races from whom we do not expect "civilized" warfare.

America's long attempt at neutrality

*To the United States*, even more than to France or England, the war came as a surprise; and for some time its purposes and its origin were obscured by a skillful German propaganda in our press and on the platform. President Wilson issued the usual proclamation of neutrality, and followed this with unusual and solemn appeals to the American people for a real neutrality of feeling. For two years the administration clung to this policy. Any other course was made difficult for the President by the fact that many Democratic leaders in Congress were either pro-German or extreme pacifists. Moreover the President seems to have hoped nobly that if the United States could keep apart from the struggle, it might, at the close, render mighty service to the world in a world-council to establish lasting world peace.

Forces for and against neutrality

True, our best informed men and women saw at once that France and England were waging *our* war, battling and dying to save our ideals of free industrial civilization, and of common decency, from a militaristic despotism. Tens of thousands of young Americans, largely college men, made their way to the fighting line, as volunteers in the Canadian regiments, in the French "Foreign Legion," or in the "air service"; and hundreds of thousands more among us blushed with shame daily that other and weaker peoples should struggle and suffer in our cause while we stood idly by.

But to other millions — long a majority — the dominant feeling was a deep thankfulness that our sons were safe from slaughter, our homes free from the horror of war. Nor was this attitude as strange or as grossly selfish then as it seems now. Vast portions of our people had neither cared nor known

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about the facts back of the war: to such, that mighty struggle between Wrong and Right was merely "a bloody *European* squabble." And even the better informed of our people found it not altogether easy to break with our century-long tradition of a happy aloofness from all Old-World quarrels.

Such indifference or apathy, however, needed a moral force to give it positive strength. And this moral force for neutrality was not wholly lacking. Many ardent workers, and some leaders, in all the great reform movements believed that in *any* war the attention of the nation must be diverted from the pressing need of progress at home. To them the first American gun would sound the knell, for their day, of all the reforms that they had long battled for. Still breathless from their lifelong wrestlings with Vested Wrongs, they failed to see that German militarism and despotism had suddenly towered into the one supreme peril to American life. And so many noble men, and some honored names, cast their weight for neutrality. And then, cheek by jowl with this misled but honorable idealism, there flaunted itself a coarse pro-German sentiment wholly un-American. Sons and grandsons of men who had fled from Germany to escape despotism were heard now as apologists for the most dangerous despotism and the most barbarous war methods the modern world had ever seen. Organized and obedient to the word of command, this element made many weak politicians truckle to the fear of "the German vote."

These forces for neutrality were strengthened by one other selfish motive. The country had begun to feel a vast business prosperity. Some forms of business were demoralized for a time; but soon the European belligerents were all clamoring to buy all our spare products at our own prices — munitions of war, food, clothing, raw materials. To be sure, the English navy soon shut out Germany from direct trade, though she long continued an eager customer, indirectly, through Holland and Denmark; but in any case the Allies called ceaselessly for more than we could produce. Non-employment vanished;

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wages rose by bounds; new fortunes piled up as by Aladdin's magic. A busy people, growing richer and busier day by day, ill-informed about the real causes of the war, needed some mighty incentive to turn it from the easy, peaceful road of prosperous industry into the stern, rugged paths of self-denial and war. A little wisdom, and Germany might readily have held us bound to neutrality in acts at least, if not always in feeling.

Germany makes neutrality impossible

*But more and more Germany made neutrality impossible for us.* From the first the German government actively stirred up bad feeling toward us among its own people because our people used the usual and legal rights of citizens of a neutral power to sell *munitions of war* to the belligerents. Germany had securely supplied herself in advance, and England's navy now shut her out from the trade in any case. So she tried, first by cajolery and then by threats, to keep us from selling to her enemies — which would have left them at her mercy, taken by surprise and unprepared as they were.

Quarrel over munitions

Our *legal* right to sell munitions she could not question seriously. Only two years before, she herself had been selling just such munitions freely to the warring Balkan nations. She demanded of us not that we *comply with* international law, but that we *change* it in such a way as to insure her victory — in such a way as would really have made us her ally. For our government to have yielded to her demands, and forbidden trade in munitions during the war, would have been not neutrality, but a plain breach of neutrality — and a direct and deadly act of war against the Allies.

Our government firmly refused to notice these arrogant German demands. And, says an authorized statement (in *How the War Came to America*):

"Upon the *moral* issue involved the stand taken by the United States was consistent with its traditional policy and with obvious common sense. For if, with all other neutrals, we refused to sell munitions to belligerents, we could never in time of a war of our own obtain munitions from neutrals, and the nation which had

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accumulated the largest reserves of war supplies in time of peace would be assured of victory. The militarist state that invested its money in arsenals would be at a fatal advantage over the free people who invested their wealth in schools. To write into international law that neutrals should not trade in munitions would be to hand over the world to the rule of the nation with the largest armament factories. Such a policy the United States of America could not accept."

**The submarine controversy in its early stages**

The submarine gave rise to a special controversy. The U-craft were not very dangerous to warships when such vessels were on their guard. Unarmed merchantmen they could destroy almost at will. But if a U-boat summoned a merchantman to surrender, the merchantman might possibly sink the submarine by one shot from a concealed gun, and in any case the U-boat had little room for prisoners. Thus it soon became plain that submarine warfare upon merchant ships was necessarily barbarous and in conflict with all the principles of international law. If it were to be efficient, the U-boat must sink without warning. In the American Civil War, a Confederate privateer, the *Alabama*, destroyed hundreds of Northern merchant ships, but scrupulously cared for the safety of the crews and passengers. But from the first the German submarines torpedoed English and French peaceful merchant ships without notice. Little chance was given even for women and children to get into the lifeboats, and of course many *neutral* passengers were murdered.

**The new phase in 1915**

And now, in February, 1915, Germany proclaimed a "submarine blockade" of the British Isles. She drew a broad zone in the high seas about Britain, declaring that any merchant ship, even of neutral nations, within those waters was liable to be sunk without warning.

**The *Lusitania***

The world could not believe that Germany would really practice the crime she threatened. But May 7, 1915, the great English liner *Lusitania* was torpedoed without any attempt to save life. Nearly twelve hundred non-combatants were drowned, many of them women and children! The Germans hailed this dastardly deed as heroic, celebrating it with holidays

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and a commemorative medal. With characteristic mendacity, too, their government asserted, falsely, that the *Lusitania* was really a war vessel, loaded with munitions.

*One hundred and fourteen of the murdered* Lusitania *passengers were American citizens;* and there at once went up from much of America a fierce cry for war; but large parts of the country, remote from the seaboard, were still indifferent to a "European struggle," and there were not lacking some shameless apologists for even this massacre. President Wilson, zealous to preserve peace, used every resource of diplomacy to induce Germany to give up its horrible submarine policy. At the same time he distinctly pointed out, in note after note, that a continuance in that policy would force America to fight.

President Wilson's "notes"

The "First Lusitania Note" (after declaring that the use of submarines against merchant ships must *necessarily* endanger the lives of passengers and of neutrals, and after urging Germany to give up a practice so contrary to civilized warfare and to the law of nations) closed:

"The Imperial German Government will not expect the government of the United States to omit any word *or any act* necessary to the performance of its sacred duty of maintaining the rights of the United States and its citizens, and of safeguarding their free exercise" (June 13, 1915).

The "Third Lusitania Note" (July 21) refused to consider the tissue of evasions put forward by Germany as in any way "relevant" to a discussion of "the grave and unjustifiable violations of the rights of American citizens," and uttered solemn warning, that if these "illegal and inhuman" acts were persisted in, "they would constitute an unpardonable offense" . . .

"Repetition by the commanders of German naval vessels of acts in contravention of these rights must be regarded by the Government of the United States . . . *as deliberately unfriendly.*"

These well-meant efforts of the President were answered by the German government with quibbles, cynical falsehoods, and contemptuous neglect. Other merchant vessels were sunk, and finally (March, 1916) the sinking of the *Sussex*, an English passenger ship, again involved the murder of American citizens. President Wilson's note to Germany took a still sterner tone

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Wilson's seeming victory

and specifically declared that one more such act would cause him to break off diplomatic relations. Germany now seemed to give way. She promised, grudgingly and with loopholes for future use, to sink no more passenger or merchant ships — unless they should attempt to escape capture — without providing for the safety of passengers and crews (May 4).

This episode, running over into the *third* year, closed the first stage of this controversy. President Wilson's year of negotiation seemed to have won a victory for civilization. As he afterward complained, the precautions taken by the Germans to save neutral or non-combatants proved distressingly meager, but for some time " a certain degree of restraint was observed."

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# CHAPTER VII

## THE THIRD YEAR, 1916

England fully aroused

The year 1916 brought the struggle back to the Western front. England had awakened from her complacency and was at last putting forth her full strength. The splendid volunteer army was now supplemented by conscription, wholly new to England, and the "work or fight" rule was applied to every able-bodied man between 18 and 45. The commander-in-chief, General French, a veteran of the Boer War, had been succeeded (October, 1915) at his own request by a younger man, Sir Douglas Haig. Haig would be ready to strike by midsummer.

The German Crown Prince attacks Verdun

Accordingly Germany planned to strike first and put France out before Britain was quite ready. February 21, weeks before campaigns would usually open in that region, she made a gigantic effort to deal a mortal blow by an attack on Verdun. The capture of that famous fortress, it was felt, would open the road to Paris. Certainly it would have been a terrific shock to the French morale.

For four days the Germans gained ground swiftly. A vast concentration of artillery prepared the way for each assault, and then huge masses of trained soldiery carried their objectives each day, — though with almost incredible losses. But France rushed in her reserves by thousands in motor busses,[1] and after February 25 her defense steadily tightened, meeting the haughty German boasts with the tight-lipped defiance — "They shall not pass." For two months more the Germans

[1] This method of transportation saved France. There was no time to construct military railroads, and human legs could not do the job. The motor bus won a new importance.



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kept up the attack with some expectation of final success; and then for still two months more they renewed the assault from week to week, at a staggering cost of life, because the High Command dreaded the blow to its military prestige involved in a confession of failure.

France was saved. The German failure was generally ascribed to the Crown Prince, who had directed the campaign. Germany now put Hindenburg, the victor in the East, in supreme command of all her armies.

**The British advance on the Somme**

July 1 the new British armies began their carefully prepared drive along the Somme. Lloyd-George himself had taken over the ministry of munitions some months before; and this time — for the first time during the war — the English had a superiority in guns and high explosives, while their tanks, now used first, wrought terrible havoc in the German lines. But the intended French drive, further south, did not come to a head — partly because of the exhaustion of the Verdun campaign, partly, it was whispered, because at this moment the French legislative chamber, having already driven Joffre into retirement, saw fit again to interfere disastrously with the plans of the military staff. The English struggled on magnificently for four months, winning back a considerable extent of French soil, with many villages, and driving a deep dent into the German line. But that line was still *unbroken* when the unusually severe weather of November brought the campaign to a close. Two hundred thousand young Englishmen had given their lives and six hundred thousand more lay mangled in hospitals. But they had proved that industrial England in two years had created and trained an army more than a match, unit for unit, for the veteran army of militaristic Germany.

**Brief Russian revival**

The war on the East front during this season furnished two surprises on the side of the Allies, but neither was of lasting value. (1) Russia showed a remarkable recovery. Early in June her armies took the offensive against the Austrians. For a month they won swift success — in great part because their opponents were largely subject Slavo-Czechs, who welcomed

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chances to surrender to a possible deliverer of their provinces from Austrian oppression. By July, however, the new supplies of Russian ammunition had again given out, and Germany had rushed to Austria's rescue a number of veteran divisions from the West front. Russia had been saved from complete collapse, the year before, by the desire of the Teutonic powers to crush Serbia and to consolidate their hold upon the Ottoman world. Now she was saved again for the moment by sacrificing Roumania.

**Roumania enters the war — and is betrayed by Russia**

(2) For now Roumania had entered the war. This story is still obscure. Roumania wished of course to recover from Austria the great Roumanian province of Transylvania, and apparently the Tsar had induced her to go in too soon by promises of support that was never given. The German traitorous court party at Petrograd, now in control over the weak Tsar, planned a separate peace with Germany, and seems to have intended deliberately to buy easy terms for Russia by betraying Roumania to the Central Powers. Bulgarians and Teutons entered doomed Roumania from south and west. December 16 the capital fell, and only the rigors of winter enabled the Roumanian army to keep a hold upon a narrow strip of its country. The large Allied army at Salonika did not stir: why is not yet fully explained. No doubt if it left its base, it was in peril of being stabbed in the back by Constantine of Greece; and the Tsar vetoed all proposals of effective measures against that petty despot — from tenderness for a fellow monarch.

**Conditions at the close of 1916**

Thus the year 1916, too, ended gloomily. Germany had tremendously strengthened her position in the East, and had lost nothing in the West. Her supply of man-power, it was suspected, was running low, along with stocks of fats, rubber, cotton, and copper, and other metals. Her poorer classes were suffering bitterly from undernourishment — especially the children, whose death-rate had tremendously increased. But her ruling classes felt no pinch and showed no discouragement; and the world was uncertain how far her domination in the

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East might retrieve her markets. Moreover, Russia was crumbling: transportation was broken down; the industrial system — always crude — was practically gone; hunger and despair ruled the peasantry; and only the stubborn resistance of the Duma and of a few great generals seemed to prevent a separate Russian peace, with complete victory for Germany on the East. On the other hand, England, France, and Italy were vastly better prepared for the struggle than ever before, and were about ready for their maximum effort. If they could make that effort before Russia collapsed, they still hoped for success.

And there were not wanting signs that the Allies were soon to receive long-delayed help from another quarter.

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# CHAPTER VIII

## THE FOURTH YEAR, 1917

### *America Enters and the War Spreads*

**Woodrow Wilson's re-election in 1916**

In America, Woodrow Wilson had been reëlected President in November, 1916, after a peculiar campaign. Many of his followers, especially in the West and among the workingmen, shouted the slogan, "He kept us out of war." On the other hand, Mr. Wilson's firmness in defending American rights, and his plain drift toward the Allies, drew upon him the hatred of large organized pro-German elements. Neither party made the war a clear issue.

**German plots against neutral America**

But no sooner had the dust of this political campaign cleared away than the American people began to find indisputable proofs of new treacheries and new attacks upon us by Germany, *even within our own borders.* The official representatives of Germany in the United States, protected by their diplomatic position (and bound by every sort of international law and common decency not to interfere in any manner with our domestic affairs), had placed their hirelings as spies and plotters throughout our land. They had used German money, with the approval of the German government, to bribe our officials and even to "influence" our Congress. They had paid public speakers to foment distrust and hatred toward the Allies. They had hired agitators to stir up strikes and riots in order to paralyze our industries. They incited to insurrection in San Domingo, Haiti, and Cuba, so as to disturb our peace. They paid wretches to blow up our railway bridges, our ships, our munition plants, with the loss of millions of dollars of property and with the murder of hundreds of peaceful American workers. Each week brought fresh proof of such outrage —



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more and more frequently, formal proof in the courts. The governments of the Central Powers paid no attention to our complaints, or to the evidence we placed before them regarding these crimes; and so finally President Wilson dismissed the Austrian ambassador (who had been directly implicated) and various guilty officers connected with the German embassy.[1]

**German threats and hostility**

All this turned our attention more and more to the hostility to our country plainly avowed for years by German leaders. Said the Kaiser himself to our ambassador (October 22, 1915) at a time when our government was showing extreme gentleness in calling Germany to account for her murder of peaceful American citizens on the high seas, — "*America had better look out. . . . I shall stand no nonsense from America after this war.*" Other representative Germans threatened more specifically that when England had been conquered, Germany, unable to indemnify herself in exhausted Europe for her terrible expenses, would take that indemnity from the rich and unwarlike United States. Our writers began to call our attention to the fact that this plan had been cynically avowed in Germany for years before the war began (*Conquest and Kultur*, 102–112). Slowly we opened our eyes to the plain fact that just as the conquest of France had been intended mainly as a step to the conquest of England, so now the conquest of England was to be a step to the subjugation of America. It came home to us that our fancied security — unprepared for war as we were — was due only to the protecting shield of England's fleet. If Germany came out victor from the European struggle, we must give up forever our unmilitaristic life, and turn our country *permanently* into a huge camp, on a European model, as our only chance for safety from invasion and rapine — and there was much doubt whether time would be given us to form such a camp. To live in peace, as we wished to live, we must help crush the militaristic power that hated and despised and attacked peace. German despotism and peace for free peoples

**America forced to choose between temporary war and permanent militarism**

[1] For proven guilt, see the notes to President Wilson's *Flag Day Address*, as published by the Committee of Public Information, Washington, D.C.

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could not exist in the same world. We had long hoped to keep the peace by being peaceful. *But now peace had gone.* We could win peace back only by fighting for it.

Wilson's final attempts for peace

President Wilson strove still to avoid war. Even the complete breaking off of diplomatic relations, should that come, he pointed out, would not necessarily mean war. At the same time he had begun to speak solemn warning to our own people that we could not keep out of the struggle, or out of some like struggle, unless peace could be secured soon and upon a just basis. December 22, he sent to all the warring governments a note asking them to state their aims. The Allies demanded "restoration and reparation," with an adjustment of disputed territories according to the will of the inhabitants, and "guarantees" for future safety against German aggression. Germany replied evasively, making it plain that her own suggestion at this same time for a peace conference was merely sparring for time.

Then January 22, 1917, the President read to Congress a notable address proposing *a League of Nations to enforce Peace*, and outlining the kind of peace which, he thought, the United States would join in guaranteeing, — not a Cæsar's peace, not a peace of despotic and irresponsible governments, but a peace made by free peoples (among whom the small nations should have their full and equal voice) and "made secure by the organized major force of mankind."

Germany resumes "unrestricted" submarine warfare

Germany had ready a new fleet of enlarged submarines, and she was about to resume her barbarous warfare upon neutrals. She thought this might join the United States to her foes; but she held us impotent in war, and believed she could keep us busied at home. To this last end, through her ambassador at Washington — while he was still enjoying our hospitality — she had secretly been trying, as we learned a little later, to get Mexico and Japan to join in an attack upon us, *promising them* aid and *huge portions of our western territory.*

January 31, the German government gave a two-weeks notice that it was to renew its "unrestricted" submarine

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**The United States breaks off diplomatic relations**

policy, explaining to its own people, with moral callousness, why it had for a time *appeared* to yield to American pressure — and offering to America an insulting privilege of sending one ship a week to England provided it were painted in stripes of certain colors and width, and provided it followed a certain narrow ocean lane marked out by Germany. President Wilson at once dismissed the German ambassador, according to his promise of the preceding March, recalled our ambassador, Gerard, from Berlin, and appeared before Congress to announce, in a solemn address, the complete severance of diplomatic relations — expressing, however, a faint hope that the German government might still refrain from compelling us, by some "overt act," to repel force by force. By March 1, Germany had begun again actually to sink passenger ships and murder more Americans; and on March 3, the President asked Congress to approve his plan of placing armed guards from the nation's forces on our merchant ships. More than 500 of the 531 members of the two Houses were eager to vote their approval; but a filibustering minority prevented a vote in the Senate until the expiration of the session on the next day.

**"Armed" neutrality**

March 12, in exercise of his constitutional powers, the President did put guards on our merchant vessels. Germany announced that such guards if captured would be treated as pirates. Meantime, many more Americans had been murdered at sea by the sinking of neutral vessels.[1] The temper of the nation was changing swiftly. Apathy vanished. Direct and open opposition to war there still was from extreme pacifists and from pro-Germans, including the organization of the

[1] Besides the eight American vessels sunk before March, 1916, eight had been sunk in the one month from February 3 to March 2, 1917. During the two months, February and March, 105 Norwegian vessels were sunk, with the loss of 328 lives. By April 3, 1917, according to figures compiled by the United States government, 686 neutral vessels had been sunk by Germany *without* counting American ships. When we turn to the still more important question of lives, we count up 226 American citizens slain by the action of German submarines before April, 1917. For details, see *The War Message and the Facts Behind It.* Published by the Committee on Public Information, Washington, D. C.

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Socialist party: but the great majority of the nation roused itself to defend the rights of mankind against a dangerous government running amuck, and turned its eyes confidently to the President for a signal. And April 2 President Wilson appeared before the new Congress, met in special session, to ask it to declare that we were now at war with Germany. April 6, by overwhelming votes, that declaration was adopted.

**Declaration of war, April 6, 1917**

America went to war not to avenge slights to its "honor," or merely to protect the property of its citizens, or even merely to protect their lives at sea. America went to war not *merely* in self-defense. **We did war for this, but more in defense of free government, in defense of civilization, in defense of humanity.** Said President Wilson in his War Message:

**American war aims**

**"The present German submarine warfare against commerce is a war against all mankind. . . . The challenge is to all. . . . Neutrality is no longer feasible or *desirable*, when the peace of the world is involved, and the freedom of its peoples, and when the menace to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic governments backed by organized force which is controlled wholly by their will, not the will of their people. . . . *We have no quarrel with the German people.* . . . A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of *democratic* nations. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it. Only free peoples . . . can prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interests of their own. . . .**

**"We are now about to accept the gage of battle with the natural foe to liberty. . . . We are glad . . . to fight for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples, *the German people included*. . . .**

**"The world must be made safe for democracy. . . . We have no selfish ends. We desire no conquests, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensations for the sacrifices we shall freely make.**

**"It is a fearful thing to lead this great, peaceful country into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace; and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts — for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments,**

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**for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations. . . .**

**"To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and for the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other."**

**American unity**

Splendid was the awakening of America, following quickly on the President's call. True, some misled pacifists and the positive pro-German forces still did their utmost to give aid and comfort to the Kaiser. Patriotic pacifists, however, like Mr. Bryan, recognized that to oppose our entering the war was a matter of judgment, but that now to hinder the success of America in the war was treason. Mr. Bryan had resigned from the Cabinet, in June of 1915, as a protest against the President's firmness in pressing the *Lusitania* matter: but now he promptly declared, "The quickest road to peace is through the war to victory"; and he telegraphed the President an offer of his services in any capacity. Henry Ford, who had led a shipload of peace enthusiasts to Europe the year before, to plead with the warring governments there, now placed his great automobile factories absolutely at the disposal of the government, and soon became a valued worker in one of the government's new War Boards. Charles Edward Russell, choosing to be an American rather than a Socialist if he could not be both, became one of a great Commission to Russia, and on his return supported and explained the war with voice and pen. Like action was taken by other leading Socialists, as by John Spargo and Upton Sinclair. And the oldest Socialist paper in America, *The Appeal to Reason*, soon declared itself convinced by President Wilson's statements, and came out as *The New Appeal* in support of the war. The great majority of Americans of German birth or descent also rallied promptly to the flag of the land they had chosen. Most important of all, the organized wage-earners spoke with emphasis and unity for

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America and democracy. Led by their patriotic president, Samuel Gompers, the delegates of the American Federation in November, by a vote of 21,579 local unions as against 402, organized the *Alliance for Labor and Democracy* to support the war and to combat a pacifist "People's Council" which had been claiming to speak for labor.

**The war spreads**

And now the war spread more widely still. Cuba at once followed the example of the United States in declaring war against Germany, and most of the countries of South and Central America either took the same action within a few months or at least broke off diplomatic relations with the Central European Powers.[1] Portugal had entered the war in 1916, because of her close alliances with England. Siam and China came in a little later.

This lining up of the world had mighty moral value, and no small bearing upon the matter of supplies. In particular, the German ships which, since the beginning of the war, had been seeking refuge in the harbors of these new belligerents were now seized for the Allies, and helped to make good the losses due to submarines. Few of these powers except America, however, had much direct effect upon military operations.

**German success in 1917**

And in spite of the entry of America, Germany continued to win great success in 1917. As the Germans had hoped, Russia dropped out. The Tsar's reactionary or incompetent ministers had maddened the Petrograd populace by permitting

[1] A characteristic act of German perfidy toward Argentine is worth noting for the sidelight it throws upon the conduct of German agents in the United States before we entered the war.

Argentine was neutral, and its government indeed was rather pro-German; but the people were growing restive because of the repeated sinking of Argentine ships by German submarines. Finally the German ambassador to that country sent a secret dispatch to his government, advising it earnestly not to give up its practice, but thereafter when it sank an Argentine vessel *to make sure that no trace survived of ship or crew* ("spurlos versenkt"). This document was secured by an American secret agent. The German government never showed regret for its representative's vile suggestion of wholesale murder of citizens of a power to which he was daily professing friendship and whose guest he was.

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or preparing breakdown in the distribution of food. March 11, the populace rose. The troops joined the rioters, and the rising quickly became a political revolution. Absolutely deserted by all classes, Nicholas abdicated on March 15. The Liberal leaders of the Duma (Constitutional Democrats led by Miliukof) proclaimed a provisional government, which was promptly and peacefully accepted by the army and by the nation. Optimists among the Allies believed that Russia had merely passed from an inefficient autocracy to a sane and efficient republic. Keener-eyed thinkers warned (1) that, in the complete collapse of her industrial system, Russia would almost inevitably be forced into the hands of extremists; and (2) that the huge empire would probably break up into separate and possibly warring states — which in the past had had no real bond of union except the perished autocracy.

**The Russian Revolution: the provisional government of Constitutional Democrats**

These gloomy surmises proved correct. The provisional government of Miliukof could not stand the strain of foreign war and of internal dissolution, and in a few weeks (June, 1917) it was replaced by a Socialist-democratic government led by Kerensky. This interesting man was an emotional, well-meaning enthusiast, — a talker rather than a doer, altogether unfit to grapple with the tremendous difficulties before Russia. Finland, the Ukrainian districts, and Siberia were showing signs of breaking away from central Russia. Everywhere the peasants had begun to appropriate the lands of the great estates, sometimes quietly, sometimes with violence and outrage. The army was completely demoralized. The peasant soldiers, so often betrayed by their officers, were eager for peace, that they might go home to get their share of the land. In all large cities, extreme Socialists began to win support for a further revolution, and in some places anarchists were taking the lead.

**The Kerensky government**

Kerensky battled against these conditions faithfully, and for a while with some show of success. He tried zealously to continue the war, and, in July, he did induce part of the demoralized army to take up the offensive once more. But after slight successes, the military machine collapsed. Whole regiments

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and brigades mutinied, murdered their despotic officers, broke up, and went to their homes. The remaining army was intoxicated with the new political "liberty," and fraternized with the few German regiments left to watch it. Russia was really "out of the war." After a six-months rule, Kerensky fled from the extremists, and (November 7, 1917) these extreme Socialists (the Bolsheviki) seized the government and announced their determination to make peace.

**The Bolshevik Revolution: Russia out of the war**

During the chaos under Kerensky, the real power had fallen over nearly all Russia to new councils of workmen's delegates (with representatives also from the army and the peasantry). The Bolsheviki had seen that these "soviets," rather than the old agencies, had become the real government, and by shrewd political campaigning they captured these bodies, so securing control over the country.

It should be clearly recognized, however, that no Russian government could have continued the war. The Russian people had borne greater sacrifice than any other; they were absolutely without resources; and they were unspeakably weary of war.

**The campaign in the West**

In the West, the Allies had begun the spring campaigns in high hopes. The French had borne the heaviest burden so far, but they were ready for one more supreme blow. Their new commander, Nivelle, however, though a brilliant general, proved erratic and unsafe, and his great offensive on the Aisne was heavily repulsed. He was superseded by Pétain, the hero of Verdun; but the army was so demoralized and discouraged that it could undertake no further important operations during the season.

**Nivelle's failure on the Aisne**

**The German "strategic retreat" to the "Hindenburg Line"**

Very early in the season the Germans had executed an extended withdrawal in front of the British lines from their trenches of two years' warfare to a new "Hindenburg Line," which, they boasted, had been prepared so as to be absolutely impregnable to any assault. This maneuver confessed a superiority in the English fighting machine — which the Germans

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had hitherto professed to despise — but it delayed Haig's attack for some weeks. His heavy guns had to be brought up to the new positions over territory rendered almost impassable by the Germans in their retreat, and new lines of communication had to be established. These things were accomplished, however, with a rapidity and efficiency wholly surprising to the German High Command; and in the subsequent British attack the Germans were saved only by the fact that now they were able to transfer all their best divisions from the Russian front to reinforce their troops pressed by the British. Even so, Haig continued to win important successes in Picardy and Flanders from April to November; but the blunder by Nivelle and the collapse of Russia made it impossible for him to " break through " to stay.

**The great British offensive**

The Russian military collapse had been caused in part by an exceedingly skillful German propaganda. Russian soldiers had been taught persistently by German emissaries that the war was the Tsar's war, or at least a capitalist war; and that their German brothers were quite ready to give the new Russia a fair peace. A little later the same tactics were repeated successfully against Italy. In August of 1917 the Italian armies seemed for a while to have overcome the tremendous natural difficulties confronting them. They had won important battles and had taken key positions commanding Trieste, when suddenly their military machine, too, went almost to pieces. The Germans had been using with the Italian rank and file a skillful propaganda. England and France, the Italian soldiers were told, were looking only to their own selfish ambitions, and were leaving Italy an unfair share of the burden of the war. Peace could be secured at any moment if only Italy would cease to attack Austrian territory. Meanwhile the wives and children of Italian soldiers were in truth famishing for bread, and information to this effect — both reliable and exaggerated — was creeping through to the ranks.

**German " propaganda," successful in Russia, now tried in Italy**

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The Italian collapse

While the Italian morale was so honey-combed, the Austrians suddenly took the offensive. They met at first with almost no resistance. They tore a huge gap in the Italian lines, took 200,000 prisoners and a great part of Italy's heavy artillery, and advanced into Venetia, driving the remnants of the Italian army before them in the rout. French and British reinforcements were hurried in; and the Italians rallied when they saw how they had been tricked and how their country had been opened to invaders. The Teutons proved unable to force the line of the Piave River; and Venice and the rich Lombard plain were saved. Italy had not been put out of the war as Russia had been; but for the next six months, until well into the next year, the most that she could do, even with the help of Allied forces sadly needed elsewhere, was to hold her new line while she built up again her broken military machine.

The U-boat campaign fails

The brightest phase of the year's struggle for the Allies was at the point where there had seemed the greatest peril. Germany's new submarine warfare had indeed destroyed an enormous shipping tonnage, and for a few months had really promised to make good the threat of starving England into surrender. But the English navy made a supreme effort. An admirable convoy system was organized to protect important merchant fleets; shipbuilding was speeded up, to supply the place of tonnage sunk; submarine chasers and patrol boats waged relentless, daring, and successful war against the treacherous and barbarous craft of the enemy. America sent five battleships to reinforce the British Grand Fleet, and — more to the purpose — a much more considerable addition to the anti-submarine fleet; and newly created American shipyards had begun to launch new cargo ships in ever increasing numbers, upon a scale never before known to the world. The Allies were kept supplied with food and other necessaries enough to avert any supreme calamity. Before September, 1917, the menace — in its darkest form — had passed. Submarines remained a source of loss and serious annoyance; but it had

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become plain that they were not to be the decisive factor in the war.

**America's man-power begins to count**

Moreover, America was slowly getting into the struggle — slowly, and yet more swiftly than either friend or foe had dreamed possible. The general expectation had been that, totally unprepared as the United States was for war, her chief contribution would be in money, ships, and supplies. These she gave in generous measure (Chapter IX, below). But also, from the first the government wisely planned for military participation on a huge scale. Congress was induced to pass a "selective conscription" act; and as early as June a small contingent of excellent fighters was sent to France — mainly from the old regular army. In the early fall, new regiments were transported (some 300,000 before Christmas), and perhaps half a million more were in training. By 1920, it was then thought by the hopeful, America could place three million men in the field in Europe, or even five million, and so decide the war. But events were to make a supreme exertion necessary even sooner; and America was to meet the need.

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# CHAPTER IX

## THE LAST YEAR, 1918

France could stand one more year of war, but she was very nearly "bled white," as Germany had boasted. Her working classes were war-weary and discouraged, and the Germans had infected all classes in that country more or less successfully with their poisonous and baseless propaganda to the effect that England was using France to fight her battles, and that she herself was bearing far less than her proper share of the burden. French morale was in danger of giving way somewhat as Russian and Italian had given way. It was saved by two things: by the tremendous energy of the aged Clemenceau — "The Tiger" — whom the crisis had called from his retirement to the premiership; and by the encouraging appearance in France, none too soon, of American soldiers in large numbers.

**French discontent and war-weariness**

**Peace feeling in England**

Even in England, peace talk began to be heard, not merely among the workers but here and there in all ranks of society. And among the laborers this dangerous leaning was fearfully augmented when the Russian Bolsheviki published the copies of the "Secret Treaties" between England, France, Italy, and the Tsar's government, revealing the Allied governments as purchasing one another's aid by promises of territorial and commercial spoils. For the first time the charge against the Allies that on their side too the war was "a capitalist war" was given some color of presumption.

In Germany, too, the masses of the people were war-weary. The entire generation of their young men was threatened with extinction, and their children were being pitifully stunted from lack of food. The Reichstag actually adopted resolutions in favor of peace without annexations or indemnities — which from the German viewpoint was extremely conciliatory. But

**Conditions in Germany**



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the junkers and great capitalists were still bent upon complete military victory, which they seemed to see within their grasp; and the German war lords at once made it plain that they recognized no binding force in the Reichstag resolutions. They had knocked out Russia, put out Italy temporarily at least, and might now turn all their strength as never before upon France and England. They were confident that they could win the war before American armies could become an important factor. The Allies, they insisted, had not shipping enough to bring the Americans in any numbers; still less to bring the supplies needful for them; and then the Americans "couldn't fight" anyway without years of training.

**A race between Germany and America**

Thus in 1918 the war became a race between Germany and America. Could America put decisive numbers in action on the West front before Germany could deliver a knock-out blow? While winter held the German armies inactive, the British and American navies carried each week thousands of American soldiers toward the front, English ships carrying much the greater number.

**Wilson's "diplomatic offensive"**

And during these same months America and England won a supremely important victory in the moral field. In the summer of 1917 the Pope had suggested peace negotiation on the basis of July, 1914 — before the war began. Woodrow Wilson at once answered, for America and for the Allies, that there could be no safe peace with the faithless Hohenzollern government. This cleared the air, and made plain at least one of the "guarantees" the Allies must secure. Then Germany tried another maneuver: she put forward Austria to suggest peace negotiations — in hope, no doubt, of weakening the Allied morale. Instead, in two great speeches, Lloyd-George and President Wilson stated the war aims of the Allies with a studious moderation which conciliated wavering elements in their own countries, and at the same time with a keen logic that put Germany in the wrong even more clearly than before in the eyes of the world. Lloyd-George (January 6) demanded complete reparation for Belgium, but disclaimed intention to

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exact indemnities other than payment for injuries done by Germany in defiance of international law. President Wilson's address contained his famous Fourteen Points, of which fuller mention will be made later. These statements of America and England began effectively to drive a wedge between the German government and the German people, by convincing the masses that the Allies were warring only for freedom and for peace, and not for the destruction of Germany.

**The Brest-Litovsk Treaty**

And now Germany herself made plain how absolutely right the Allies were in their contention that the Hohenzollerns could be trusted to keep no promises. March 3, 1918, the German militarists, with the grossest of bad faith, shamelessly broke their many pledges to the helpless Bolsheviki and forced upon Russia the "Peace of Brest-Litovsk." By that dictated treaty, Germany virtually became overlord to a broad belt of vassal states taken from Russia — Finland, the Baltic Provinces, Lithuania, Poland, Ukrainia — and even the remaining "Great Russia" had to agree to German control of her industrial reorganization. When the German perfidy had revealed itself suddenly, after long and deceitful negotiations, the angered and betrayed Bolsheviki wished to break off, and renew the war. They were absolutely helpless, however, without prompt Allied aid upon a large scale. This aid they asked for, but urgent cablegrams brought no answer. The Allies apparently had been so repelled by the Bolshevist industrial and political policy that they were unwilling to deal with that government, and preferred to leave Russia to its fate — and to the Germans.

At that moment the result was disastrous. Murmurs in Germany against the war were stilled by the immediate prospect of an empire stretching from the North Sea to the Pacific, and of large accumulated stores of Russian wheat — as soon as transportation systems could be restored to efficiency.

In all the Allied countries tremendous popular feeling was aroused against the Bolsheviki government. In part this was because the people — ignorant of the facts just men-

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tioned — believed that government a mere tool of Germany. In part it was due to hatred and fear among propertied classes toward any Socialist régime. But more than all else, it was due to a false position adopted by the Bolsheviki in government. They excluded all people living on their capital from political life.

This of course was not a democracy: it was a class rule. True, in Russia it was the rule of more than ninety per cent of the whole population; but the example of a "proletarian dictatorship" was dreaded by the "upper" and "middle" classes everywhere. Moreover, the Bolsheviki announced a repudiation of the Russian national debt.[1] The Russian bonds were owned mainly in France; and that country persuaded the Allies to treat the Russian government as an enemy. Soon, too, various reactionary and middle-class movements against the Bolsheviki tyranny found leaders for a vigorous civil war.

**The great German offensive in Picardy in March**

Naturally the Germans opened the campaign in the West at the earliest moment possible. They had now a vast superiority both in men and in heavy guns there. March 21 they attacked the British lines in Picardy with overwhelming forces. After five days of terrific fighting the British were hurled out of their trench lines and driven back with frightful losses nearly to Amiens, leaving a broad and dangerous gap between them and the French. It looked as though the Germans might drive the British into the sea, or the French back upon Paris, or both. But, as so often in their great offensives in this war, the Germans had exhausted themselves in their mass attack; and while they paused a French force threw itself into the gap, and British reserves reinforced the shattered front lines. For the first time since the First Battle of the Marne, the Germans had forced the fighting into the open, where they had always claimed

[1] The Bolsheviki afterward offered to give up this policy if accorded recognition. Read William Hard's articles on "Bolshevist Russia" in the *Metropolitan* (June–October, 1919) — based on the account by Raymond Robins.

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marked superiority; but they were unable to follow up their success decisively.

The offensive in Flanders in April

In April they struck again farther north, in Flanders, and again they seemed almost to have overwhelmed the British; but fighting desperately, " with our backs to the wall " as Haig phrased it in his solemn order to his dying army, and reinforced by some French divisions, the British kept their front unbroken, bent and thinned though it was.

The offensive on the Aisne in the last of May

The Germans took another month for preparation, and then struck fiercely in a general attack on the French lines north of the Aisne. Apparently the French were taken by surprise. The Germans broke through, for the moment, on an eighteen-mile front; and once more reached the Marne. Here, however, they were halted, largely by American troops, at Château-Thierry. Then, while the Americans made splendid counter-attacks, as at Belleau Wood (renamed, for them, " Wood of the Marines "), the French lines were reformed, so that still the Allies presented a continuous front, irregular though it was with dangerous salients and wedges. At almost the same time, Austria, forced into action again in Italy by German insistence, was repulsed in a general attack on the Piave.

Checked by Americans at Château-Thierry

Time given for the Americans to arrive

Time was fighting for the Allies. The disasters of the early spring, the suggestion of the American commander, General Pershing, and the imperative demand of Clemenceau, at last induced them to take the wise step of appointing a generalissimo. This position was given to Ferdinand Foch, mentioned above in the story of the First Marne. For the rest of the struggle, the Allied forces were directed with a unity and skill that had been impossible under divided commands, even with the heartiest desire to coöperate.

And now, too, America really had an army in France. Before the end of June, her effective soldiers there numbered 1,250,000. Each month afterward brought at least 300,000 more. By September the number exceeded two million.

The Germans could not again take up the offensive for five weeks (June 11–July 15), and in this interval the balance of

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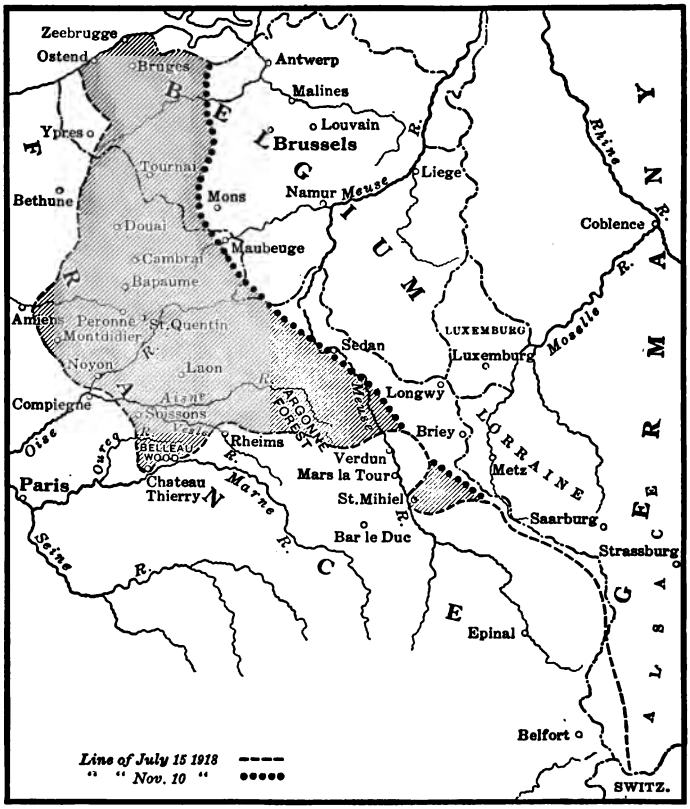
**The last German offensive**

available man-power seems to have turned against them. Hindenburg and Ludendorf (chief of staff, supreme for long past in German military councils) believed only in mass attacks over wide fronts. When one of these gigantic onsets had once




THE GERMAN LINES ON JULY 15 AND ON NOVEMBER 10.

been stopped, with its tremendous losses and demoralization, a considerable interval had to elapse before another could begin. July 15, preparations were complete, and the Germans attacked again in great force along the Marne, expecting this time to reach positions that would command Paris. But the onset

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broke against a stone-wall resistance of French and American troops. *For the first time in the war*, a carefully prepared offensive failed to gain ground.

**Foch's continuous offensive**

The German failure was plain by the 17th. On the 18th, before the Germans could withdraw or reorganize, *Foch began his great offensive*, by counter-attacking upon the exposed western flank of the invaders. This move took the Germans completely by surprise. Their front all but collapsed along a critical line of twenty-eight miles. *Foch allowed them no hour of rest.* Unlike his opponents, he did not attempt gigantic attacks, to break through at some one point. Instead, he kept up a continuous offensive, threatening every part of the enemy's front, but striking now here, now there, on one exposed flank and then on another, always ready at a moment to take advantage of a new opening, and giving the Germans no chance to withdraw their forces without imperiling key positions. That is, he kept the ball in his own hands; and though his forces perhaps were still inferior in numbers to the Germans, he took no intervals for rest — which would have allowed the enemy to attempt a new offensive.

**The German retreat**

By the end of July the invaders had been pushed out of the ground they had gained in May and June, between the Aisne and the Marne. Then the British, reorganized now, were brought again into action in Picardy, taking the burden of the offensive, while the French kept up activity enough to prevent any transfer of reinforcements to that district from the sector opposite them. For some weeks, the Americans, steadily growing in numbers and equipment, were held in reserve for the most part — after their gallant fighting in stopping the last German offensive — but before the end of August the British and French had won back all the ground lost in the German offensives of the spring.

**The Americans at Sedan**

The Germans had made their last throw — and lost. Foch's pressure never relaxed. In September American divisions began an offensive on a third part of the front, culminating in a drive toward Sedan, to cut one of the two main railways that

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supplied the German front, and at the same time the British were wrenching great sections of the "Hindenburg Line" from the foe. In the opening days of October *the German commanders reported to Berlin that the war was lost*, and that it was necessary to try to get peace by negotiation. For the next month, while there went on an exchange of notes regarding an armistice, the German military situation grew steadily more critical.

**Germany asks for an armistice**

**Bulgaria had already fallen**

At the same time, it is true that Germany lasted longer than any of her allies and that her collapse was determined largely by *events in the East*. In September, the Allied force, so long held inactive at Salonika, suddenly took the offensive, crushing the Bulgarians in a great battle on the Vardar. Political changes had made this move possible. In 1917, now that the Tsar could no longer interfere, the English and French had deposed and banished King Constantine of Greece; and Venizelos, the new head of the Greek state, was warmly committed to the Allied cause. Moreover, the Bulgarians were war-weary and demoralized. They had failed to get from Germany and Austria the spoils they hoped at the fall of Roumania; and now after their one great defeat they had neither spirit nor forces to continue the struggle. Foch's pressure made it impossible for the Germans to transfer reinforcements to them from the West. The Salonika forces advanced swiftly into Bulgaria. Tsar Ferdinand abdicated, and (September 30) the Provisional Bulgarian government signed an armistice amounting to unconditional surrender and opening also the way for an attack upon Austria from the south.

**And Turkey**

And while these events were happening, a wholly independent series of movements were putting Turkey out of the war. In the spring of 1917 an English force from India worked its way up the Tigris and took Bagdad — after a romantic campaign that recalls the wars and marches of Alexander the Great in the Orient — and in the fall of the same year, another British force from Egypt took Jerusalem. But the Russian collapse endangered both these promising movements, and the pressure

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of the Germans on the West front made it unsafe for England then to send more men to either of these important Eastern districts. But by midsummer of 1918, reinforcements were sent at last to Palestine; and September 19, the British resumed a remarkable campaign north of Jerusalem. The Turks were utterly routed in a decisive battle, and the pursuit was so hot and so continuous that they never rallied in any force. Aleppo, the key to Northern Syria, surrendered October 26, without a blow, — and with it fell the Ottoman Empire outside Asia Minor. The Turks saw that the collapse of Bulgaria had isolated them from any possible German succor — and in any case Germany was no more able to spare troops now for them than a month before for Bulgaria. The Turkish government at Constantinople fled. A new one was hastily constituted; and, October 30, Turkey surrendered as abjectly as Bulgaria. The Dardanelles were opened, and Constantinople admitted an Allied garrison.

**And Austria**

Austria too had dissolved. After the June repulse on the Piave, the Austrian army was never fit for another offensive. At home the conglomerate state was going to pieces. Bohemia on one side, and Slovenes, Croats, and Bosnians on the other, were organizing independent governments — with encouragement from America and the Allies. Then, October 24, Italy struck on the Piave. The Austrian army broke in rout. Austria called frantically for an armistice, and when one was granted (November 4) the ancient Hapsburg Empire had vanished. The Emperor Karl (recent successor to the old Francis Joseph) abdicated. Fugitive archdukes and duchesses crowded Swiss hotels. And each day or two saw a new revolutionary republic set up in some part of the former Hapsburg realms.

**The Allies refuse to treat with the German autocracy**

Germany had begun to treat for surrender a month earlier, but held out a week longer. October 5, the German Chancelor (now Prince Max of Baden) had asked President Wilson to arrange an armistice, offering to accept his "fourteen points" as a basis for peace. Wilson's replies to this and to a following communication made it plain that America and the Allies would

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not treat with the old despotic government, and that no armistice would be granted at that late moment which did not secure to the Allies fully the fruits of their military advantages in the field. Meantime the fighting went on, with terrific losses on both sides, but with daily increase in the military superiority of the Allies. The Americans, pushing north in the Argonne and across the Meuse, were threatening the trunk railway at Sedan, the only road open for German retreat except the one through Belgium. The British and Belgians pushed the discouraged invaders out of northern France and out of a large part of Belgium. The pursuit at every point was so hot that retreat had to be foot by foot, or in complete rout; and it was not clear that even that choice would long remain. Moreover, the fleet at Kiel was in mutiny, and the Extreme Socialists — all along opposed to the war — were openly preparing revolution.

**German revolution**

**The armistice, November 11**

Not till late in October did the War Council of the Allies make known to Germany the terms upon which she could have an armistice preliminary to the drafting of a peace treaty. By those terms Germany could save her army from destruction, and her territory would not suffer hostile conquest. But she was to surrender at once Alsace-Lorraine, and to withdraw her troops everywhere across the Rhine, leaving the Allies in possession of a broad belt of German territory. She was also to surrender practically all her fleet, most of her heavy artillery, her aircraft, and her railway engines. Likewise she was at once to release all prisoners, though her own were to remain in the hands of the Allies. In March, Germany had treacherously and arrogantly set her foot upon the neck of prostrate Russia in the Brest-Litovsk treaty: November 11, she made this unconditional surrender to whatever further conditions the Allies might impose in the final settlement — though the Allies did pledge themselves to base their terms, with certain reservations, upon Mr. Wilson's Fourteen Points.

Germany had already collapsed internally. November 7, Bavaria deposed her king and proclaimed herself a republic.

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State after state followed. In Berlin the moderate Socialists seized the government — with the support of the aristocracy — against the efforts of a more radical Socialist element, who were striving to accomplish a further revolution. November 9, deserted by the army, the Kaiser had fled to Holland, whence he soon sent back to Germany his formal abdication. German autocracy and Prussian militarism had fallen forever.

**German revolution completed**

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# CHAPTER X

## WAR EFFICIENCY OF A DEMOCRACY

No other war was ever so enormously destructive, but neither did any other war ever give birth to so many healing and constructive forces. These forces we can most easily notice in our own land, but it should be kept in mind that they were found also in other countries, especially in England and France — in some respects, too, in more advanced forms even than in America.

For this study there are two phases, more or less intertwined: (1) that phase which had to do mainly with greater efficiency in the war itself; and (2) that other phase which looked to a better and finer world after the war. The first phase is the theme of this chapter.

America's task

To our own surprise, and to that of the world, we proved that American democracy, utterly unready for war as it was, could organize for war, by *voluntary* coöperation, more efficiently and swiftly than any autocracy had ever done. Said President Wilson at the beginning — "It is not an army we must shape and train; it is a nation. . . . The whole nation must be a team in which each man shall play the part for which he is best fitted." The task was not merely to select and train three million soldiers, but to mobilize one hundred million people, so that every ability and every resource could be utilized with the utmost intelligence and harmony. After all, battles in modern war are won mainly *behind* the lines. The most important mobilization was mobilizing our civilian population to produce and transport munitions and supplies, to raise food, supply fuel, and furnish abundant funds.

At once the government put skilled brains at work: (1) to find out just what was needed in all these respects, and in what



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order, so as to be able to distribute effort wisely; (2) to find which men were best fitted for each job — often by systems of tests in the hands of educational experts; (3) to teach the nation, careless and wasteful by previous training, that *to save* food, clothing, and other supplies was just as useful and just as patriotic as *to produce* them; and (4) first of all, to educate the whole people as to what the war really meant and as to the best ways of coöperating in all these ways to win it.

**Fitting each man to his job**

The great Committee on Public Information at Washington, created by President Wilson, was a new thing in human history. If a democracy was to turn away from all its ordinary ways of living in order to fight, it must be thoroughly posted on the danger that threatened it, and on the needs of the hour. Within a few months this Committee, at small expense, had published and circulated in every village in America more than a hundred different pamphlets, brief, readable, forceful, written by leading American scholars, and distributed literally by the million. These publications did a marvelous work in spreading information and arousing will power among the people, demonstrating that in war itself "the pen *is* mightier than the sword." Most of these studies are of permanent scholarly value, and some of them are referred to in footnotes and book lists in this volume.

**The Committee on Public Information: American propaganda**

With this Committee originated also the admirable organization of Four-Minute Men, — some 5000 volunteer speakers to explain the causes and needs of the war in their respective communities to audiences gathered at the movies and at other entertainments. Speakers and occasions were matters of local arrangement; but the central Committee put the plan in operation and made it effective by sending to all the thousands of local centers at frequent intervals suggestions and information on which to base the speeches.

**The Four-Minute Men**

The same Committee secured the chief of America's illustrators, with a strong staff of volunteer assistants, to design posters and placards, — which were plentifully distributed in every city and village in the land to arouse more determination to save food and to save money to be loaned to the government.

**War posters**

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It is impossible to explain here the many other activities of the Committee — such as the cultivation of friendly feeling in South American lands, the uncovering of German plots, the driving of a wedge between the German people and its government by shooting propaganda into Germany. And this Committee is only one instance out of many of the work of eminent American chemists, historians, engineers, heads of great business enterprises, who served at Washington during the war as volunteers with at best only a nominal money compensation, and often as " one dollar a year " men.

The United States formed no " alliance " by treaty with any of the Allies, but it recognized that they and we were " associated " as co-workers, and that we must give them every possible aid. At first, as has been said (p. 70), the Allies looked to us mainly for money, raw materials, and food.

**Raising funds for war**

Money we furnished freely. To England, France, Italy, and Belgium (and to Russia before her collapse) we loaned nearly ten billions of dollars, most of which, it is true, was used by those governments in purchasing supplies in America. Within a few months after the war began, the special session of Congress in the spring and summer of 1917 appropriated the unparalleled sum of twenty-two billions of dollars for war purposes. Five billions of this was loaned to the government at once by citizens of all classes in the purchase of the first and second issue of Liberty Bonds (August and October, 1917). These bonds were sold mostly in small denominations, down to $50, and were taken largely by people of small means. During this first season one out of every ten people in the United States (children and all) became a bond-holder by so loaning to the government. During the next year and a half, by three more bond issues, the government borrowed of our people, including the earlier issues, seventeen billions. (For the fourth issue alone, the largest loan, there were twenty-one million subscribers, or one of every five inhabitants.) Besides all this, vast sums were loaned to the government in even smaller amounts, by the purchase of Thrift Stamps

**Liberty Bonds**

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(25 cents each) and War Savings Stamps ($5), — an effective way of encouraging small savings.

The amazing success of these loans — which for the most part were heavily oversubscribed — is the more marked because the interest was low and because money at that time could earn much higher return in many other ways.

**War taxes**

But we had to raise money also by taxation. The first War Revenue bill provided for direct taxes to raise two and a half billions a year, and a subsequent bill increased the amount to more than four billions a year. Half of this came from a graduated income tax and allied taxes (an inheritance tax, and an "excess profits" tax). The income tax took 2 per cent of a small income [1] and rose by steep degrees to 65 per cent of very large incomes. Moreover, large amounts were raised by a "luxury tax," payable on a great variety of articles of clothing costing more than a certain price. In general, a serious effort was made by America to arrange the system of taxes so that for the first time in the world, the cost of war should not fall mainly on the working classes.

**Saving food and "doing without," to feed our Allies**

England needed our cotton and wheat, and France and Italy could not fight longer without our iron and coal as well. These things we strove to send. But all the Allies, stripped of their own farm workers, needed American food; and *our poor harvest in 1917 left us no surplus above our ordinary consumption.*

This was an alarming condition. To meet it, Congress gave the President extraordinary powers over the nation's resources. The President created a Food Commission, headed by Herbert C. Hoover, an American business man and engineer, who for the three years preceding had shown signal administrative ability and devotion to humanity as head of the American Relief Commission in starving Belgium. (When we entered the war, Mr. Hoover and his American associates in Belgium had been obliged to return to the United States.)

[1] Each taxpayer was allowed $1000 income exempt from taxation; husband and wife, $2000; and $200 more was exempt for each minor child.

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This Commission, by spreading information broadcast and by skillful appeals kept everywhere before the eye, induced the American people voluntarily and cheerfully to limit its consumption, and especially to "save the waste." Wheatless and meatless days each week, agreed upon according to the Commission's "request" and enforced by public opinion, and a rigid limit on the amount of sugar allowed to any locality, made it possible for our government to export huge amounts of these three most essential foods for the peoples whose armies were fighting our battles in Europe.

By saving waste, and by using substitutes, we cut down our use of wheat for one year almost half; and the half so saved gave to every person in England, France, and Italy almost as much as we used at home. We had less than 20 millions of bushels to export in 1917, if we used as much as usual at home; but, by doing without, we did export 141 million bushels.

**War profiteering largely held in check**

To prevent this European demand from raising prices exorbitantly, and to check speculation in foodstuffs, the Commission took important steps in fixing fair prices and in regulating profits. This last, it must be said, was not wholly successful. Congress had not given the President power enough, vast as was his power. The price of wheat flour was fixed; but many millers took advantage of the patriotic determination of the country to use cheaper grain, like rye flour and oatmeal, by raising the prices of these flours exorbitantly. This was one instance of disgraceful "profiteering." There were others; and the government did not prove strong enough successfully to prosecute and punish any big profiteer. Still, on the whole, the record of the "big-money" interests in the war was extremely creditable (although we did have 17,000 more millionaires when the war closed than when we began).

**War saving a democratic, voluntary movement**

The above statement regarding the savings brought about among the people by voluntary consent is by no means complete. The woman's committees of the Defense Councils issued cook books to show the housewife how to save and how

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to use what had previously gone to the garbage can. In 1918, on the advice of the National Commercial Economy Board, manufacturers of clothing put forth fewer and simpler styles, omitting all needless buttons, frills, belts, collars, and so on. This alone saved millions of yards of cloth — fifteen per cent, it is estimated, of the cloth usually needed for men's clothing, and twenty-five per cent for women's.

Along with this saving, went also, of course, work for increased production. Farmers increased their acreage for the most needed crops, receiving from State or Nation necessary advances in money for seed or machinery. Needed farm labor was furnished by volunteer school boys — who were allowed school credits for the time so spent. And a vast amount of food was raised in new " war gardens " on small private grounds which before had been devoted, very rightfully, to beauty and pleasure.

**Shipbuilding**

To carry these supplies to Europe in spite of the ravages of submarines a new Shipping Board built ships on a scale beyond all precedent. First of all, new shipyards had to be built, and whole new cities to house the tens of thousands of new shipbuilders — who in turn had to be trained for their new work. Like much else in our haste, all this was not done without some sad blunders and much extravagance. But it *was done*, and done *swiftly*. In less than a year, America's new plants were turning out ships much faster than England's centuries-old yards had ever launched them. The new shipyards beat the submarine — and America could afford some extravagance in that work in return for speed.

**The railroad**

Transportation at home had its own problems. The railroads began to break down almost at once under the increased business imposed upon them by the war; and the nation felt keenly the waste of so many non-coöperating systems. In December of the first year, Congress passed a law turning the railroads over to the government (guaranteeing profits to the owners), which began to operate them as one system for the

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period of the war. Telegraph and express companies also passed into government hands.

**Saving coal and gasoline**

The mines were not ready on short notice to supply coal as fast as war needs called for it. Hard coal for ship and railroads and for many war industries we had to have. Accordingly the government regulated its private use. People learned to save fuel, to heat their houses and offices only to 65° instead of to 70° or 72°, and many changed their heating plants so as to use soft coal or wood. For many weeks in 1918, at the request of the government, churches were closed, and stores, amusement halls, and most industries were closed on certain days of the week, to save coal. People grumbled a little, but joked and assented. A little later, to save gasoline needed in France for tanks and auto-trucks and aëroplanes, "gasless Sunday" took its recognized place alongside "heatless," "wheatless," and "meatless" days, — all essentially on government *recommendation* only.

**Labor standards saved**

In zeal to secure more rapid output of war supplies, some States began to repeal existing laws limiting hours of labor for women and children. Organized labor protested wisely, and the government stepped in to check this disastrous tendency — which had already been tried and abandoned in England. The important thing was, not to "speed up" production for a few weeks, at cost of a long let down afterward, but rather to "keep fit," to keep labor at the top notch of vitality, to gear our industry for a long hard pull, not for a short spurt. Said President Wilson, in a telgram to one State governor:

"It would be most unfortunate for any of the States to relax the laws by which safeguards have been thrown about labor. I feel that there is no necessity for such action. It would lead to a slackening of the energy of the nation, rather than to an increase, besides being unfair to the workers."

**The selective draft, and its success**

It was necessary that America should give of her manhood as well as of her wealth. So far as results go, that story has been told in preceding pages. Here we may briefly note the method.

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At the declaration of war, eager volunteers pressed forward for army and navy; but what was needed was more than *individual* volunteers. America needed a wise use of the whole nation's resources, each man being assigned the job he could do best. And so, May 18, 1917, the " selective draft " became law. Every man and youth from 18 to 45 (by the first law only from 21 to 31) was required to register in his county seat, giving, in answer to a questionnaire, full information about his character, training, health, and ability. All were *liable* for service: the President was to lay down principles upon which to *select* for service in the ranks those best fitted, or most easily spared from other service.

Before the end of the year, half a million soldiers were training in fifty swiftly built camps — each camp a new city — largely under officers who had been trained earlier in the year in new officers' training camps; and some 300,000 were already in France, receiving the finishing touches to their training just behind the trenches. When the armistice came, a year later, we had three million men under arms, of whom more than two million were doing splendid work in France. It is hard to say whether the Kaiser or we ourselves were the more astounded at the swift making of an American army.

**Local activities**

Along with this national activity, there was a vast volunteer activity by local democracies, always looking gladly to Washington for advice and direction, but also quite ready to trust to their own initiative if needful. Each State had its Council of Defense (modeled on the Council of National Defense). Most of these were well supplied with State funds; and many of them did exceedingly useful work in promoting unity, arousing interest, and suppressing possible treason within their States. Below each State Council, and in constant touch with it, were county and village councils of like character. In rural districts, the schoolhouse was usually the center for such bodies to meet, as well as for local chapters of the Red Cross and for war lectures.

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**Other organizations**

Even more significant than these public organizations, were the thousands of canvassing boards that served in the draft without pay; the examining boards of busy physicians, who gave their time freely to secure the physical fitness of the soldiers; the volunteer bodies of village teachers, working Saturdays, Sundays, and nights, to classify the results of draft questionnaires; the Red Cross societies in every neighborhood; and the volunteer canvassers for Liberty Bond sales, wherein the Boy Scouts had a fine share. Democracy proved that, when attacked, it could put aside its ordinary life of work and play, to take on war activities with resolution, efficiency, and unanimity unexcelled.

True, there were some blots on this splendid record. Here and there, selfish or stupid politicians sought personal popularity by wrapping their country's flag about them, or tried to discredit or destroy rivals by false accusations of lack of patriotism. In the heat of war passion, some grave injustices were committed; and some foolish offenders were punished too severely. Mob violence, even, was permitted, and in some cases against thoroughly patriotic men falsely accused by personal enemies. The method by which poor people were sometimes intimidated into taking more bonds than they could afford did not suit well the name *Liberty* for those bonds. These things America will regret; but, spite of such blemishes, the history is a proud one.

**The work of the women**

It will not do to omit mention of woman's share in the war. In all the good work described above, she had a part. But we must remember further that, in America as elsewhere, behind each man who took up a rifle there stood a woman to take up the work he laid down. Even in America, women ran elevators, street cars, and motor busses, and took up new and heavy work in factories, — especially in munition factories and in air-craft building. In England, as her men were drained away, five million women took up men's work, — an Earl's daughter sometimes toiling in a munition factory at the same bench with

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a working girl from the streets. And in America, in twenty states, college girls enlisted in the "Woman's Land Army," for outdoor farm work.

Nor was it only in manual toil that these new workers played a new part. Many kinds of office work and business management were taken over by women with marked success — as well as much of the organization and most of the work of the Red Cross both in America and with the American army in France.

In all countries this war efficiency of women gave the final impetus to the movement for equal suffrage. The last "argument" against suffrage — the silly plea that a woman ought not to vote because she could not fight — was proved false.

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## CHAPTER XI

### THE WORLD LEAGUE AND NEW EUROPE

January 18, 1871, the first German Emperor placed the new imperial crown upon his own head at Versailles, while his victorious armies were still besieging Paris. January 18, 1919, the Peace Congress opened its meetings in the same room of the Versailles Palace, to reconstruct Europe after the fall of the German Empire.

**Attempts at working-class rule in Central Europe**

There was supreme need of reconstruction. Central Europe had broken into fragments, and each fragment was tossing helplessly on waves of revolution. In Germany an extreme wing of the Socialists, led by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, were planning a second revolution to take power from the "Conservative Socialists" of the Provisional Government into the hands of the working class. Those two leaders, splendidly fearless, had been foremost in all Germany in opposing Prussian militarism before the war;[1] and Liebknecht had spent most of the war years in prison as a traitor to German autocracy, because he had dared to oppose the war even after it began. Freed by the fall of autocracy, he now taught that selfish capitalist and imperialist forces would try to make a peace of plunder. Only a workingman's government in Germany, he preached, and the spread of such a government into France and England, could secure a lasting peace based on justice and righteousness.

This mistaken doctrine, however honest in the leaders, was suited for use by selfishness, ignorance, and passion. Accordingly in several large German cities, especially in Berlin,

[1] See C. Altschul's *German Militarism and its German Critics*, War Information Series, No. 13.



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"Soldiers and Workingmen's Councils" seized the government in the interest, not of democracy, but of "class" rule. These bodies were attacked promptly by the regular troops, which for the most part remained true to the Provisional Government. Thousands fell in bloody street fights, marked by the use of poison gas, machine guns, and liquid fire. The superior equipment of the government forces in all such respects triumphed; and Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg were taken prisoners — and brutally murdered by their guards.[1]

**German National Assembly of 1919**

Then in January, 1919, Germany held an election for a National Assembly. By a new franchise law promulgated by the Provisional Government, all men *and women* over 19 years of age had been given the vote, and an excellent system of "proportional representation" secured due weight to minority parties. The result was a clear victory for a union of Moderate Socialists ("Majority Socialists") and "German Democrats" (the old Liberals).

To avoid revolutionary dangers, the Assembly met at Weimar instead of at Berlin. By a 3 to 1 vote, it chose Ebert (once a saddler) president of the German Republic (February 11), organized under a coalition cabinet led by Philip Scheidemann, and discussed a new permanent constitution while waiting for peace terms from the Allies.

Through the winter and spring, this government was constantly threatened by further revolution. Factories could not open for lack of cotton, or rubber, or iron, or capital, or markets in which to sell goods. Germany's ships had been taken by the Allies, to help replace those her submarines had sunk, and the Allied blockade had been lifted only far enough to permit the introduction of some foods, — not enough to restore any real trade with the world. Under these conditions, new proletarian revolutions took place in some of the states, — especially in Bavaria, where a workingman's government main-

**The Bavarian Revolution**

[1] Some of the assassins were obliged to go through the form of a trial. Two were sentenced *to two years' imprisonment:* but the next day one of these "escaped," —a fitting conclusion to the farce of the trial.

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tained itself ably for several weeks, until crushed, after the assassination of its leader, Kurt Eisner, by the union of all other forces.[1]

An American newspaper correspondent and editor describes for his paper the session of the Bavarian legislature February 22, 1919. He had just entered the newspaper gallery for the first time. "The correspondent of the Frankfürter *Zeitung* kindly pointed out the various dignitaries. That Minister on the right was a locksmith's apprentice a little while ago. Timm, Minister of Education, on the left, is a tailor's son and was long a public school teacher; Suer, there, about whose head the storm is raging, is the son of a sewing woman. He left school at eleven to be a herd boy for eleven years. . . . Several women delegates came in. Now they are all here except the President, Kurt Eisner (who had been a poor newspaper man). Then a young man rushes in, pale as a sheet, and a voice calls 'Kurt Eisner has been shot.'"

The old German Austria became a republic, and the government voted repeatedly in favor of joining Germany; but France was unwilling to see Germany so strengthened; and, as a result, Austria, too, has been threatened with a proletarian revolution.

**Hungary and Austria**

Hungary had become a republic under enlightened middle-class control. The President, the liberal-minded Count Karolyi, voluntarily gave up his princely domain for common use, and plead with the Allies for terms that might make the new government secure. The delay of the Allies in relieving the country, so that it might get food and work, led after a few weeks to a further revolution, — perfectly bloodless this time, — which put in power a proletarian dictatorship under Bela Kun, similar to the Bolshevist rule in Russia. This has just given way (August, 1919), under Allied pressure, to a more moderate Socialist rule. Moreover Roumania had taken advantage of

[1] The German Republic will be a *federal* state. Of course each state had already put off the old monarchic government. In Prussia, for instance, the Upper House of the legislature had been abolished, and the Lower House was now elected by universal franchise — which included women.

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the woes of Hungary to declare war upon that country, and continued her invasion even after the Hungarian government declared its willingness to cede all its Roumanian lands — until the Peace Congress called a halt.

All the other lands of the old "Central Empire" had already fallen away, but not into peace. An enlarged and free Bohemia

(the Czecho-Slav Republic) was practically at war not merely with Germany and Austria, but also with the new Polish Republic, over conflicting boundary claims; and this new Poland, under the leadership of Paderewski, the famous pianist, had other contests with Russian Bolsheviki on one side and with Germany on the remaining land frontier, besides being torn by

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internal factions and busied in massacring its Jews. To the south of old Austria, there had appeared a Jugo-Slav republic by the long sought union of Serbians, Bosnians, Croatians, and Slovenes; but this enlarged Serbia and Italy were in battle array, daily in peril of war, over the Adriatic coast; while Italy and Greece were at daggers' points regarding South Albania, the islands of the Ægean, and the shores of Asia Minor.

No one of these countries felt any trust in the honor of any other. Each believed that every one would hold what he could lay hands on, and so sought to lay his own hands on as much as possible before the day of settlement. The Peace Congress had its work cut out for it.

**The Peace Congress**

That famous gathering contained the leading statesmen of the world. The United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan each sent five delegates. England's colonies, too, were represented, — two each from Canada, Australia, South Africa, and India, and one from New Zealand. Eighteen other governments, which had taken part in the war upon the side of the Allies, were allowed from one to three delegates each. Each delegation voted as a unit. Countries that had been neutral were also invited to send representatives to be called in whenever matters arose that specially concerned them. The four "enemy countries" and Russia were allowed no part. A striking feature of the gathering was the great number of expert assistants accompanying their representatives. The United States delegation alone was aided by more than a hundred prominent men, most of them eminent authorities on the history or geography or economic resources of European lands.

**Woodrow Wilson at Paris**

President Wilson himself headed the American delegation, — in spite of vehement opposition to his leaving his own country for so long a time. In like manner, Lloyd George and Orlando, the English and Italian premiers, represented their lands; and Clemenceau, head of the French delegation, was naturally chosen president of the Assembly. These men made up "the Big Four." Part of the time this inner circle became the "Big Five" by the inclusion of the Japanese representative.

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From the first it was plain that even within the Big Four there were critical differences. Mr. Wilson had promised the world, Germany included, "a permanent peace based on unselfish, unbiased justice," and "a new international order based upon broad universal principles of right." To such ends he insisted, (1) that the first step must be the organization of a League of Nations, a World federation; and (2) that all negotiations should be public — "open covenants, openly arrived at."

**Lloyd George and Clemenceau**

At times, Lloyd George seemed heartily to adopt this same program; but he was seriously hampered by the fact that in the campaign for parliamentary elections, in December, he had won by appeals to the worst war passions of the English people, even promising preposterously that Germany should pay "the whole cost of the war." The other leaders never had any real faith in the Wilson program. In Clemenceau's words, they looked upon President Wilson as a benevolent dreamer of Utopias, and they preferred to rest all rearrangements upon the old European methods of rival alliances to maintain a balance of power — a plan which had been tried, only to prove through bloody centuries a seed bed of war.

**Governments and peoples in Europe**

Moreover France was dissatisfied and panicky. Germany, prostrate for the moment, still bordered upon her, with a population and resources a half greater than her own. So it is easy to understand that many French statesmen should have wished above all things to deal with Germany by German methods — to make her helpless by dismembering her and by plundering her through indemnities, and to build up the new Poland and Bohemia by giving them enough German territory so that they might always be fearful of Germany and therefore hostile to her. Such states on the east, with France on the west, could then hold Germany in a vise between them.

Such a program meant the perpetuation of the old European system of alliances, armed camps, and, sooner or later, of war. But by the war-weary *peoples*, if not by the governments of Europe, the Wilson program of a just peace and a world-league was at first hailed with joy. Mr. Wilson had arrived in Europe

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several weeks before the opening of the Congress, for conferences with European statesmen; and everywhere in his journey — in England, France, Italy — he was welcomed by the working classes with remarkable demonstrations of respect and affection, as "the president of all of us," as the Italians put it, — as the apostle of world peace and of human brotherhood. For a time it looked possible for him, at a crisis, to override the hostile attitude of the governments by appealing over their heads to the people themselves: and indeed in a great speech at Milan — just after some slurring attacks upon him by French statesmen — he hinted pointedly at such a possible program.

**Mr. Wilson weakened by events at home**

But as months passed in wearisome negotiations, this popular fervor wasted away, and in each nation bitter animosities began to show toward neighboring and allied peoples. Moreover Mr. Wilson had been fatally weakened in Europe by events at home. Late in the campaign for the new Congressional elections in the preceding November, he had made a special and ill-judged appeal to the country for indorsement of his policies by a Democratic victory. But the elections instead gave both Houses to the Republicans; and the jubilant victors, charging vengefully that the President had set an example of political partisanship, entered upon a bitter course of criticism and obstruction. Mr. Wilson's European opponents made the most of this — if indeed they did not, as many thought, have a positive part in starting it.

**Secret negotiations**

Mr. Wilson's first defeat at Paris was in the matter of secret negotiation. To save time, it was necessary no doubt for the Peace Congress to do most of its work in small committees. But it would have been possible to lessen bargaining and intrigue by having such meetings open, or at least by having stenographic reports of each meeting. Mr. Wilson, however, allowed the Old World diplomats — with their tradition of backstair intrigue — to outgeneral him into consenting to only one public and general meeting each week. The result was that, from the first, the real work was done by the inner circle of four or five in secret conclave (with the addition of

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several advisory *secret* committees on special matters); and instead of even the promised open meeting once a week there were during the entire five months (January 18 — June 28) only four such meetings — and these not really for discussion but merely to ratify conclusions arrived at by the Big Four.

**Agreement for a League of Nations**

The next point Mr. Wilson won. It was agreed that the first business of the Congress should be to provide a League of Nations. With such a league to guarantee peace, to secure disarmament, and to punish any bully or robber state, it was hoped that France and Italy might trust to a just and merciful peace, instead of insisting upon a peace of vengeance and booty. Many voices, in France and in the United States Senate, had been raised in protest, urging instead, as German statesmen had urged while they felt themselves victorious, that such a league should come only *after* a treaty of peace. But Mr. Wilson argued that the League would expedite, not hinder, the peace treaty, since it was a necessary prelude to any right sort of peace. This view prevailed.

**Spoils or Justice**

While a committee of fourteen nations, headed by Mr. Wilson, was preparing the covenant, or constitution, of the League, the American President won what seemed for a time another great victory. The first discussions regarding territorial changes showed the usual disposition on the part of the victors to grab spoils. France talked of the necessity that she acquire all German territory west of the Rhine, "her natural frontier," so that in future wars that great river might serve as a protective ditch. Marshal Foch supported this plea for military reasons. This of course would have transferred several millions of unwilling Germans to French rule.

Italy, too, advanced new claims on the Adriatic at the expense of the new South Slav state. And it became plain that the imperfectly known "secret treaties," under which Italy and Japan had entered the war, had provided for a far-reaching division of spoils not only at the expense of Germany but also to the danger of future wars. Enough news leaked out from the secret conclaves to make it certain that President Wilson at

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once denounced these projects, and declared he would have no part in a "Congress for booty." At one time, indeed, when the Italian delegates insisted strenuously upon Croatian Fiumè (the natural door of the South Slavs to the Adriatic), he cabled to America for his ship — a plain threat that he would leave Paris rather than assent. England and France then gave him their support, and this particular act of plunder was avoided — even though Orlando did for a while leave the Congress in protest. Unhappily in other cases Mr. Wilson was not always so resolute. Victory over Fiumè was followed by defeat over Shantung (p. 103).

**England and the German Colonies**

For a moment England seemed to hold the key to the situation. The secret treaties had assumed that she would retain the great bulk of the German colonies. For this there would have been much excuse. She had proved her eminent fitness for control of tropical colonies; and some of the conquered districts — if a state of war was to be looked upon as probable in the future — were essential to the safety of her other dominions. Indeed the South African and Australian representatives at Paris faced political death if they returned home without German Southwest Africa and German New Guinea in their pockets. But Lloyd George came loyally to Wilson's side. Unless England renounced her conquests for the general good, there was no escape from an old-fashioned peace of plunder; if she did renounce them, there seemed good hope that England and the United States together might persuade the other Allies to yield their selfish and injurious claims under the secret treaties. And renounce the colonies England did — though the renunciation was accompanied by the suggestion of mandatories, responsible to the coming League of Nations.

**The Covenant of the League of Nations**

In March, while other negotiations dragged along, the committee on the League of Nations made its report, and the Congress enthusiastically adopted the proposed constitution. The chief opposition to the proposal appeared in the United States Senate, where leading Republicans tried to make it a party question. This was rendered difficult, happily, by the splendid work of ex-

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President Taft, head of the American League to Enforce Peace, who, with a group of leading Republicans, toured the country to secure support for the covenant. The opposition was sufficient, however, so that after a few weeks, the Peace Congress revised the document in a few details.

The revised covenant is clear and brief. The union is very loose, and its managing bodies are not really a government. The forty-five "charter members" include all organized governments except Russia, the four "enemy countries," Costa Rica, San Domingo, and Mexico; and there is a way provided for admitting these in time. Amendments require the unanimous consent of the five big states with a majority of all states; and the unanimous consent of all nations in the League is demanded for any other action of consequence, except that no party to a dispute has a voice in its settlement. Among the most valuable provisions of the "Covenant" are the prohibition of all secret treaties in future and the clauses providing for disarmament, for regulation of the manufacture of munitions of war, for compulsory arbitration, and for delay in recourse to war even if an arbitration is unsatisfactory. A reservation of the Monroe Doctrine, inserted in the second draft as a sop to American opposition, suggests, by its unfortunate phrasing, a continuation of the pernicious doctrine of "spheres of influence," and satisfies neither advocates nor opponents of the League. Much debated, too, is Article X, which guarantees to each state its territorial integrity against external attack. Mr. Wilson wrote the original of this Article, — but in a very different form, suggesting especially the desirability of future peaceful correction of territorial boundaries by the League of Nations. In the present form, many critics fear, the Article may be a serious barrier to needed readjustments.

**The German treaty**

The value of the League will depend upon how it is worked. Meanwhile, to secure a League, Mr. Wilson "traded" many of his principles in the making of the peace treaties. Early in May the treaty of peace with Germany was handed to the German

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delegates, who had been summoned to Paris to sign for their country. The treaty makes a good-sized book. Only a few points can be stated here. A typical one relates to the Saar Valley, a small strip of German territory just east of Alsace.

**The Saar Valley**

Germany is to cede the rich coal mines of this region to France, in rightful reparation of her wanton destruction of French coal mines. Unhappily France insisted long upon political sovereignty over the territory and people, along with this property. This claim was not granted; but an unsatisfactory compromise places the valley for fifteen years under an International Commission. At the end of that time the inhabitants are to vote whether they will return to Germany or join France. If they decide for their own country, Germany must at once buy up France's claim to the coal mines. This may be difficult for her to do; but if she fails to do it, the territory passes at once and permanently to France.

This "veiled annexation" of half a million Germans to a foreign power, against their will, is in sharp defiance of the principle of "self-determination," — and it was wholly unnecessary. France ought to have the coal; but title to that could have been guaranteed safely, under the League of Nations, without this transfer of political allegiance. And the Saar Valley arrangement is merely one of several like or worse arrangements. The new Poland gets not merely the Polish territory long held by Prussia, to which she is entitled, but also large strips of German territory, like Upper Silesia (with its two million people), which she wants solely because of its mines. Moreover, in order to give Poland easy access to the sea, by the route of the Vistula, German Dantzig is made a "free" city, against its will. Besides these displeasing provisions, Germany very properly not only returns Alsace-Lorraine to France and (with a favorable vote of the inhabitants) Danish Sleswig to Denmark, but also cedes to Belgium three small pieces of territory populated mainly by people of Belgian blood. In addition to all this, if the inhabitants so vote, she is to cede to Poland considerable territory east of the Vistula. In all, Germany loses outright 35,000

**Silesia and Dantzig**

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square miles, with a *probable* loss (by plebiscites) of nearly 20,000 more — in all, a territory about the extent of Pennsylvania, and more than a fifth of the old Germany. Even this is not enough to satisfy the French government. That government has failed to get recognition for its claim to the Rhine districts of Germany; but attempts, which may yet succeed, have been fomented by French agents to induce this part of Germany to secede and form a separate state.

**The old Colonies of Germany**

Besides all this, Germany has lost her vast colonial empire. This is well. But, instead of being placed directly under the guardianship of the League of Nations until they can walk alone, the former German colonies are turned over, part to England, part to Japan, according to the terms of a secret treaty of 1914 between those countries. True, England and Japan are "mandatories" of the League of Nations; but that arrangement is left so vague and loose that it looks like little more than a scheme for the division of spoils — and Japan surely has shown herself (in Korea) as unfit to rule subject-peoples as ever Germany was.

**The Shantung matter**

In this connection Americans are especially chagrined that Japan succeeds also to all Germany's indefinite "rights" in the Shantung Peninsula, against the futile protest of China. True, Japan has promised vaguely that her political occupation shall be "temporary"; but that word has been used too often as a prelude to permanent grabs of territory. To allow the one remaining despotic and military power in the world so to seize the door to China is not merely to betray a faithful ally, but also to renounce a plain and wise American policy in the Orient.

Very objectionable, too, are the economic provisions of the German treaty. Germany is to pay *fixed* reparations amounting to about 30 billions of dollars during the next fifteen years. This is severe, but on the whole it is just. However, Germany is to pay further *indefinite* amounts, to be determined *in future* by a commission of her conquerors. This provision, along with

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accompanying rules regarding German taxation, leaves Germany's head in a noose which English or French jealousy may tighten at will.

**"Liberal" criticism of the treaty**

The treaty has been denounced vehemently by many earnest thinkers in all lands as breaking faith with a beaten and submissive foe, and, still more, as fruitful of future wars. Nine of the experts attached to the American Commission were so disappointed that they resigned their positions in protest; and General Smuts, the hero of South Africa, when signing for that country, declared in a formal statement that he signed only because of the absolute necessity of immediate peace for Europe and because he hoped that the most objectionable provisions might be modified in future by the League of Nations. Organized labor in England and France made earnest protests also against the violations in the treaty of the principle of self-determination.

This opposition has little or nothing to do with any sympathy for Germany: it is based upon a conviction that the terms are bad for the world at large, or that they are dishonorable to the Allies. But a stern peace was to be expected, and in the conflict of so many claims, some unsatisfactory provisions were sure to appear. Probably the majority of the people in the Allied lands still feel that Germany is getting off too easily.

The German delegates made many protests, and did secure some very slight modifications in the terms. Then they refused to sign. But a new Cabinet came into power, and, June 28, a new set of German delegates signed the treaty. The five years' war was ended. A few days later, the German assembly ratified the peace by a two-to-one vote. The English Parliament approved it even more unanimously. At this writing (July 25) the United States Senate has not come to a vote upon the matter — because of the intertwining of the League of Nations with the peace — but commercial intercourse with Germany has been restored.

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**The treaty with Austria**

Late in July, after the return of President Wilson to America, the treaty with Austria was completed at Paris. Austria herself is left a petty state of 7,000,000 people, grouped around Vienna, shut off from the sea, with little excuse for a separate political existence. The Austrians very naturally wish incorporation with Germany. Germany also desires it; but at French insistence, the Peace Congress has forbidden this application of the principle of "self-determination." The other precise territorial terms of the treaty are not yet made public. The most delicate concern the frontier between the new South Slav state and Italy. In general the treaty has the same traits as does the treaty with Germany.

**Remaining problems at Paris**

The treaties with Bulgaria and with Turkey are still to be worked out. The latter will care for important problems such as the disposition of Constantinople, of Armenia, of Palestine, and of the rich valley of the Euphrates. At the conclusion of peace with Germany the great statesmen left the Peace Congress, to attend to pressing needs in their own parliaments; but the remaining delegates at Paris will probably be busied for many weeks in settling these remaining matters.

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## CHAPTER XII

### HEALING FORCES

**The cost of the war**

The war *was* a world war: Eight out of every nine men on the globe belonged to the warring nations. It cost nine million lives and 200 billion dollars. A vast portion of all the wealth stored up laboriously through centuries is consumed, and over wide areas all the machinery for *producing* wealth is gone.

The United States had relatively small sacrifices to make. We entered late, and our borders were remote from the struggle. Still, eighty thousand American boys lie in French soil, and thrice as many were horribly maimed. As to money, aside from the immense sums raised by war taxes, our war debt is nearly twenty-five billions, besides some nine billions more that our government borrowed from our people to loan to England, France, Belgium, and Italy. On these loans the Allied governments will pay the interest, and possibly sometime they will be able to repay the principal; but on the remaining twenty-five billions the interest alone will each year exceed the total yearly expenditure of our government before the war. Without paying a cent of the principal, we will have to tax ourselves each year twice as much as ever before for our national government.

**The cost still to be paid**

But we must also pay the principal. If we pay it in one generation (as probably we will), that will mean one billion more of taxes a year. As we pay the principal, the interest will lessen; but, taking into account the increased cost of living for the government, it is safe to say that for the next twenty-five years we must raise three billion dollars a year, — or three fourths as much as in the war years themselves. We have boasted that in this country the war has been paid for by the wealthy classes, not by the poor. But so far (1919) we have



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hardly begun to pay that cost: if our boast is to be made good, we must raise more than two thirds of our taxes during the next years by income and luxury taxes.

**Conditions in Europe**

In Europe the burden is terrifying. Words cannot express the ruin there; and the huge totals of indebtedness in France, England, and Germany have little meaning to us. Factories are gone; shipping is sunk; raw materials for manufactures are not available; it seems almost impossible to start the wheels of industry again. Poverty and profound discouragement permeate the masses of the people. England has suffered less than the continent; but England's debt is enormous. *Without paying a penny of it,* merely to keep up the interest and her old annual expenditure, she must raise more than *five billions* of dollars a year in taxes. With her smaller population, that means that each family must pay some four times as much as an American family.

**Some lasting gains**

Still there is another side. The world is freed, we trust, from the perpetual cost of vast navies and crushing military establishments; and it has learned fruitful lessons. In the preceding chapters we surveyed some of the forces that made for *war efficiency.* Many of these, and others apart from these, make also for healing and reconstruction in peace.

The whole American people learned that when the rich family saved its fragments for a later meal, instead of casting them to the garbage can, some starving child in Europe had bread. We learned to do our daily work not so much for private gain as for the general good. We learned that every man who did not do work useful to society was a parasite, dangerous to society, whether he were a tramp or a millionaire. We learned that by coöperation, in place of wasteful competition, we could enormously increase the productiveness of our labor and machinery, and that by wise direction we could find useful work for every worker. Lessons like these, after growing into our life for two years of war, must leave a mighty effect upon our life in peace.

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**Lessons in human conservation**

And many other lessons of the war will count for peace. The medical examination of our drafted men revealed tens of thousands of cases of inefficiency and of wasted lives due to defective eyes or teeth or feet. Our doctors, dentists, and surgeons cured most of these cases, and augmented tremendously our fighting power. Surely we will now find a way to use the same healing forces to augment our power for peaceful industry and to remove needless unhappiness. Indeed our schools in their new "health crusade" have already begun to remake our nation on a sounder basis of body.

**The Vocational Board**

Very fruitful of good was the work of our National Board of Vocational Education. Many soldiers, by the loss of arms or legs or eyes, were disabled from ever taking up again the only work they had ever known. The Vocational Board of skilled experts educated and trained these disabled men, at government expense, for some new occupation for which they showed interest and fitness, making them useful and happy members of society instead of leaving them dependents and beggars. Many a real genius was thus enabled to do some work he had always longed to do but which he had never before been able to get into. The results within even a few months were so incredibly beneficent that bills were introduced into both Houses of Congress in the winter of 1919 to preserve this Vocational organization for peace, that it might at public expense do the same invaluable and merciful work for the hundreds of thousands of our people who every year are maimed in accidents and in industry. The press of Congressional work at the end of the session prevented these bills from becoming law, but the attempt will be at once renewed.

**New interest in child welfare**

Still other features of this "human conservation" have promise for the future. In Europe there had been an alarming loss of man power due to slaughter in battle. Along with this was a falling off in the birth rate. These conditions threatened depopulation. Accordingly European governments were forced to legislate, more than ever before, for *child* welfare, — especially for the saving of the lives and health of babies and mothers,

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with the use of public funds. Even in the stress of war, laws provided for reasonable rest for working mothers before and after the birth of a child, without loss of wages. Such civilized legislation has long been called for by enlightened opinion, and now it is sure to become universal.

**Housing movements**

Very early, certain leaders sensed a danger that the tense passion of war might blind us unduly to the rights of the working classes. In fighting to make the world safe for democracy it was supremely necessary to keep it safe for labor. For one illustration, the vast army of new workers in the shipyards and munition factories found no houses fit for their families, and were threatened with slum conditions of disease and squalor, besides paying exorbitant rates to greedy landlords. Accordingly a government's Housing Commission expended millions of dollars in building model homes for such workers. This has given an impulse, not to be wholly lost, to an old movement for better housing by the nation for the workers.

**The War Labor Board**

More difficult to meet was another problem. Labor had to give up its usual weapon of strikes in disputes with employers. The public good demanded this. But labor could not be left to the mercy of employers. And so Congress and the President created a *War Labor Board*. This proved one of the most remarkable parts of the war government, exercising for two years an influence upon American life second only to that of the Supreme Court. Wages were rising rapidly; and the public, only partially informed, could not easily understand that wages after all failed to keep up with the rising cost of living, and that workingmen were in danger of losing the standards of living that they had won in long years of effort.

The War Labor Board acted as a compulsory arbitration board between Capital and Labor in those industries which concerned the carrying on of the war. President Wilson appointed ex-President Taft and Mr. Frank Walsh as joint chairmen, and the other members came in equal numbers from employers and labor representatives. The Board recognized the right of labor to organize and bargain collectively,

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the eight-hour day, a living wage, and the necessity of maintaining safeguards against accidents and disease, and it encouraged in many industries the organization of "shop committees" from the workmen to confer with the employers upon all shop conditions, — a great step toward democratizing industry.

In its arbitrations, the Board itself had no power to *enforce* a decision, though in nearly every case both sides submitted at once to its award. But in some cases President Wilson found it needful to make the decisions compulsory by seizing for public use the factories whose owners refused compliance, or on the other side, by threatening strikers, who had refused an award, with military service, by withdrawing their exemption as married men. The judicial temper of Mr. Taft and his legal training and open-mindedness, made his services on this Board invaluable to the nation, and he won deep and lasting gratitude from organized labor for his understanding of their need.

**The democratization of industry**

English employers and workers during the war agreed upon the principles of the famous Whitley Report,[1] providing for the joint management of industries by Capital and Labor through joint councils of many grades. In the few months since the armistice, much has been done to extend and confirm this principle, and to provide against unemployment, to shorten the working day, and to guarantee a decent living wage to every man or woman willing to work.

In the winter of 1918 the English Labor Party adopted an even more comprehensive plan[2] for reconstruction after the war, along the same line. This plan attracted wide and favorable attention, and in Minnesota a convention of Congregational churches declared it "the one great *religious* utterance of the war." It is deeply significant that many larger religious bodies have made like declarations if somewhat less emphatic ones, — especially the Catholic Church through a report of its Ad-

[1] Printed in full in No. 135 (February 1919) of the American Association for International Conciliation.

[2] Printed in the same.

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visory War Council, and the Methodist Church, both in Canada and the United States.

In general these plans agree on the following points:

1. Recognition that industry is designed for social service, not for private profiteering.
2. A *decent* wage (not a bare living) for each worker.
3. Insurance against unemployment, with wise provision by the government for using idle labor in housing enterprises and in land reclamation, and, if necessary, for shortening the working day. (There is no excuse for a long working day, for any laborer, say many of these recent programs, as long as another willing but idle worker is standing by, asking for work.)
4. Democratizing industry, so as to give to the workers a share in management and some ownership in their jobs.
5. Limitation of the profits of capital to a reasonable amount.
6. The use of the surplus (above wages and "reasonable" profits) for the public good, — the surplus to be taken by extension of income taxes and by other new taxes on mining royalties, water power, and so on.
7. The need of greater production by Labor — for which these other changes must provide powerful inducement.

Five years ago these principles would have sounded wildly revolutionary: to-day society in general quietly assents to them.

Stirring times are before us — times once more to try men's souls. Europe is still in desperate peril of social dissolution; even America is not wholly free from danger that social revolution may destroy the wholesome and progressive evolution of our society; and the world is not yet out of the peril of a frightful shortage of food. But men of faith believe that the outlook brightens, and that a new day is breaking. Especially do these new ideas regarding Labor and the new impulses to human conservation promise a world — such as our great leaders have pointed us toward through the war clouds — "safe for democracy" and "fit for heroes."

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